



Southern California Horticultural Society

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MARCH 2006 PLANT FORUM NOTES

GREEN SHEET

Edited by Bart O'Brien

The long lost Plant Forum cards from March have been found! Much belated thanks to all who brought plants to the March 2006 meeting. 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 that were shown at this meeting are described (or listed) in the Society’s **Selected Plants for Southern California Gardens**: *Banksia integrifolia*, *Banksia serrata*, *Cantua buxifolia* ‘Hot Pants’, *Chorizema cordatum*, *Crossosoma californicum*, *Cyrtanthus brachyscyphus*, *Dichelostemma pulchellum*, *Erica canaliculata*, *Grevillea lavandulacea* ‘Penola’, *Grevillea lavandulacea* ‘Tanunda’, *Heteromeles arbutifolia*, *Lobelia laxiflora*, *Pelargonium cotyledonis*, *Pittosporum napaulense*, *Scadoxus puniceus* (shown as *Scadoxus coccineus magnificus*), *Senna artemisioides*, *Sophora secundiflora*, and *Viburnum opulus*.

The identity of the following plants could not be completely ascertained: Two unknown *Begonia* plants, *Buddleja* sp., *Chrysanthemum frutescens* cultivar (*Argyranthemum f.* in **Selected Plants**), *Euphorbia* sp. with red flowers from the Canary Islands, *Eustoma* (shown as *Lisianthus*) *grandiflorum* cultivar, *Freesia* cultivar, *Hyacinthus* cultivar, *Nicotiana* sp., *Rhododendron* (azalea) cultivar, two unknown succulents, and an unknown bulb.

The following plants were also shown but are not described in the Society’s **Selected Plants for Southern California Gardens**: *Bletilla striata* – variegated foliage, *Geranium macrorrhizum* ‘White Ness’, *Helleborus lividus*, *Helleborus* × *sternii* ‘Boughton Beauty’, *Kalanchoe blossfeldiana* – red hybrid, *Pelargonium* ‘Aurelia’, and *Syringa vulgaris* ‘Early Best’.

Banksia blechnifolia (Proteaceae). No common name. Australia: Western Australia between Jerramungup and Gibson. Prostrate evergreen shrub growing less than 2 feet tall and spreading from 7 to 15 feet wide. Beautiful deeply lobed blue-green leaves are brilliantly rust colored as they emerge. The showy cone-like inflorescences are reddish-pink. Seed grown plants flower in 4 to 5 years. This species is noted by Proteaceae expert Alex George as one of the two most vigorous prostrate banksias (the other being *B. petiolaris*). Established plants are drought tolerant, fast growing and grow best in full sun – though they will thrive in dappled to partial shade. Ellen notes that this plant is useful as a ground cover, and that it typically blooms in January and February in the Taft Garden. Plants require good drainage. (Ellen Hoffs)

Begonia ‘Brown Eyes’ (Begoniaceae). Brown Eyes Begonia. Cultivar; parentage: *B.* ‘Norah’ × *B. imperialis*. It was created, named, and introduced by Woodriff in 1973. This is a rhizomatous begonia with angel-wing shaped, silvery foliage that has green to maroon-brown margins and veining. Flowers are white and occur from late winter to spring. It is noted as having a compact growth habit. Jim’s is growing in moist shade in Santa Monica. (J. Jaeger)

Delphinium luteum (Ranunculaceae). Yellow Delphinium. California: Marin and Sonoma counties. This beautiful and rare herbaceous perennial is readily grown in containers where its horticultural requirements are easily met. Water the plant regularly through its growing season (fall through spring) commencing immediately as new growth appears in the fall. Plants will go dormant shortly after blooming in the spring. Store the container in a cool, dry secure location away from pests (mice, slugs, etc.). Bring the container out in October and wait for the new growth to emerge – you may spritz the pot with water once or twice before new growth appears, but anything more than that risks rotting the dormant rootstock. The plant grows in seasonally moist coastal areas on cliffs, in grassland, and in chaparral. Flowering plants may reach 2 feet tall. Most of the lobed leaves are produced in a basal rosette. The showy flowers are pale- to lemon-peel yellow. Plants are easily grown from seed. (Tim Evans)

Erica speciosa (Ericaceae). No common name. South Africa: Moist habitats from Caledon east to Humansdorp. One of the numerous (there are over 600 species in South Africa!) showy heathers. This evergreen shrub may reach 3 feet tall and will spread equally wide. Terminal clusters of red to pink tubular flowers are tipped with green, white, or yellow. Whorled leaves are needle-like. When grown in Southern California, most of the South African heathers want regular watering, excellent drainage, and acid to neutral soil. (Anonymous)

Erythronium multiscapoideum – Pulga form (Liliaceae). Fawn Lily. California: This form is known only from the vicinity of the Pulga bridge along the North Fork of the Feather River in Butte County. This plant is also sometimes encountered under the name *Erythronium cliftonii* – a name which has never been technically published. This is the best form of the entire genus for Southern California. The nodding flowers have reflexed perianth segments (“petals”) that are white with a large yellow center. The attractive fleshy leaves are a dark gray-green and are variously mottled with red-purple. It is well adapted to pot culture. Plants prefer regular water from fall when the foliage emerges until the plant flowers in late winter or early spring. Grow the plant in bright light or dappled shade. While the plant is dormant in the summer, store the pot in a cool dry place that is protected from mice, slugs, and other predators. When compared to the typical forms of *E. multiscapoideum*, this plant is much easier to grow and is a much larger plant overall. (Tim Evans)

Grevillea lanigera ‘Coastal Gem’ (Proteaceae). Coastal Gem Grevillea. Cultivar. The species is from Australia: New South Wales and Victoria. Evergreen shrub reaching 1 foot tall and up to 5 feet wide. An outstanding plant for use in a large rock garden or cascading over low walls. Pinkish-red and white flowers are produced in clusters and are highly attractive to hummingbirds. Fine textured foliage. Full sun near the coast to partial shade inland. Acid to neutral soil. Good drainage. This plant was introduced by the UC Santa Cruz Arboretum. (Anonymous)

Parahebe linifolia (Scrophulariaceae). No common name. New Zealand: South Island in wet rocky habitats from 1500 to 5000 feet elevation. Sprawling evergreen perennial or subshrub up to 8 inches tall and equally wide. Outstanding cascading amongst rocks or over low walls. Small, white to pink, saucer-shaped flowers are freely produced in terminal racemes. Leaves are about 1/2 inch long and are lightly serrated. Joyce notes that this plant flowers from summer to fall and that it is growing in sun to partial shade with regular watering in well drained soil in Pasadena. (Joyce Wolf)

Penstemon superbus (Scrophulariaceae). Superb Penstemon. US: Southwestern New Mexico and southeastern Arizona; Mexico: Chihuahua and Sonora. In the wild, plants are found growing in sandy, gravelly soils in pinyon-juniper woodlands from 3500 to 5000 feet elevation. This large showy species is generally recommended for warm deserts, but as indicated by the spectacular specimen that Tim brought in, it is perfectly at home in our hot, inland valleys. Flowering specimens may reach 4 to 6 feet tall. The leaves are leathery and gray-green in color. Flowers occur in whorls along the stem and vary in color from rich rose-pink to red. This species is very attractive to hummingbirds and is considered to be a close relative of our native scarlet bugler (*P. centranthifolius*). Grow this species in full sun, excellent drainage, and good air circulation. Individual plants may be short lived, but large quantities of seed are produced. (Tim Evans)

Prunus serrulata ‘Pink Cloud’ (Rosaceae). Pink Cloud Japanese Cherry. The species is from China. This deciduous tree may reach 15 feet tall and spreads equally wide. The pleasing light pink flowers are about 1.25 inches across and are produced in clusters. Leaves are about 4 inches long. Small black fruits may be produced. (Gary Kamisher)

Rhipsalis grandiflora (Cactaceae). No common name. Brazil: Rio de Janeiro to Sao Paulo. There seems to be disagreement about the proper name of this plant – some authorities use *R. hadrosoma* as the correct name for this species. Epiphytic cactus with more or less terete (cylindric) cascading stems. Flower buds often appear reddish, but the profuse flowers are creamy white with salmon throats. Small fleshy fruits are white but may be tinged pink to purple. Dick notes that this plant typically blooms in early spring and that it is growing in a well-drained soil mix in a hanging basket. (Dick Kohlschreiber)

Tristagma (Ipheion) uniflorum cultivars ‘Alberto Castillo’ and ‘Rolf Fiedler’ (Alliaceae). Alberto Castillo Spring Star Flower, Rolf Fiedler Spring Star Flower. Cultivar. The species is from Argentina. Spring flowering, summer dormant corms. Plants smell like onions when bruised. These are two recently available cultivars of the commonly grown (and often cursed) species. ‘Alberto Castillo’ has large white fragrant flowers. ‘Rolf Fiedler’ has bright blue flowers with white throats and a light scent. (Tim Evans)