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GREEN SHEET

# Southern California Horticultural Society

APRIL 2006 PLANT FORUM NOTES

*Edited by Bart O'Brien*

Thank you to all who brought plants to the April 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**: *Aechmea recurvata* var. *recurvata*, *Aporocactus flagelliformis*, *Arctostaphylos* 'Lester Rowntree', *Callistemon* 'Jeffersii', *Echeveria* 'Perle von Nurnberg', *Heuchera elegans* 'Bella Blanca', *Heuchera maxima*, *Kalanchoe synsepala*, *Orthosiphon labiatus*, *Tillandsia bergeri*, *Tillandsia tectorum*, and *Viguiera lanata*.

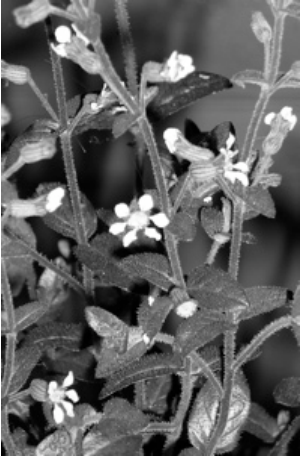
The identity of the following plants could not be completely ascertained: *Aquilegia* hybrid, *Bergeranthus* sp., *Brugmansia* hybrid, *Dudleya* sp., *Epiphyllum* hybrid, *Freesia* hybrid, two *Ixia* hybrids, *Ranunculus* hybrid, two *Salvia* species thought to be from Ecuador, and a *Wisteria* cultivar.

The following plants were also shown but are not described in the Society's **Selected Plants for Southern California Gardens**: *Ceanothus* 'Blue Cloud' and *Epiphyllum* 'Cloud Nine'.



*Anemone coronaria* 'Blue Poppy' (Ranunculaceae). Blue Poppy Anemone. Southern Europe – Mediterranean region. Deciduous geophyte – a congested tuberous rhizome. Surprisingly, this common, showy, spring-blooming plant has never been written up in the Green Sheet. Plants produce three-parted basal leaves with finely-dissected segments. Flowers are terminal, solitary, and can reach 3 to 4 inches across. Flower color varies from white, red, blue, to violet – though those of this cultivar are bluish. Grow this plant in full sun to partial shade in well-drained soil that is allowed to go dry for the summer months. Plants are typically short-lived and generally need to be replaced after 2 to 3 years. It is outstanding as a container subject. (Ric Dykzeul)

*Ceanothus* 'Blue Sapphire' (Rhamnaceae). Blue Sapphire Ceanothus. California. Evergreen shrub growing about 3 feet tall and spreading to at least 6 feet wide. The fascinating thing about this cultivar is that it has dark coppery foliage, deep violet-blue flowers. This plant originated as a bud mutation on a plant of 'Blue Cushion' that was growing in a garden center in Rotorua, New Zealand. It was selected and propagated by Karen and Warick Wilson in 1994, and was introduced by their nursery in Drury. The plant was subsequently distributed to the US and Europe by Lyndale Nurseries of Auckland, New Zealand. This is the only southern hemisphere selection of *Ceanothus* that has been brought back to California. To date, this plant has performed best near the coast though it is probably too early to tell what its adaptability in California will be. (Elizabeth Schwartz)



*Cuphea varia* 'Susan's Little Gem' (Lythraceae). Susan's Little Gem. Brazil. An easily grown perennial reaching 18 inches tall and 3 feet across. Terminal sprays of pink-tubed, white-petaled flowers are freely produced over many months from spring to fall. In some gardens, this plant is noted as freely seeding around. These flowers are attractive to hummingbirds. Plants prefer average garden conditions: regular watering and full to partial sunlight. (Dick Kohlschreiber)

*Eremophila racemosa* [*Eremophila bicolor*] (Myoporaceae). Easter Egg Emu Bush. Western Australia. Evergreen shrub. Plants prefer full sun and well-drained soils. In the wild, this plant typically grows on lateritic soils and has a life span of about 10 years. Plants naturally have an upright, rather sparse growth habit and may reach from 4 to 6 feet tall. Tubular flowers appear singly at the leaf axils and are yellow in bud, reddish-orange when freshly open and fading to pink and lavender purple. There is also a yellow-flowered form. Leaves are narrow – almost linear – and are held close to the stem. In cultivation pinch them regularly for a fuller appearance. Plants in windy areas are often blown out of the ground. It is noted that this species performs well when grown in containers and cuttings of vegetative growth root quickly. This species has a very restricted natural range. (Debra Bushweit Galliani)



*Knowltonia vesicatoria* (Ranunculaceae). No common name. Cape Province, South Africa. Evergreen, stemless, rhizomatous, perennial herb to about 2 feet in height. Plants typically grow in shaded areas in forests and scrub vegetation. This species was brought into cultivation in Southern California by Gary Hammer. He described it as South Africa's Hellebore equivalent – a most apt observation. Plants are noted as slow-growing, but Laura's plant seems to have developed quickly. The flowers are composed of pale green to whitish sepals (like hellebores, there are no true petals) and are about one inch across. Leaves have three leaflets, and are coarsely serrated, leathery, and attractive. However, it is noted that contact with bruised leaves may cause dermatitis similar to that of poison oak – so be careful! Plants may be divided after flowering, but are easier to grow from seed. Botanically *Knowltonia* species are noted as being closely allied to the genus *Anemone*, but this genus differs by producing fleshy drupelets (fruits). Laura has grown her plant in a container for several years and it is performing very well. (Laura Bauer)

*Lepismium bolivianum* [*Rhipsalis boliviana*, *Hariota boliviana*] (Cactaceae). No common name. Bolivia. Epiphytic succulent. Stems of this species look like coarsely serrated leaves. Dick notes that he grows this plant in shade with moderate water, and that it flowers (these are quite small) from March to April. Plants in the genus *Lepismium* are separated from *Rhipsalis* by their different branching habit and the fact that they are usually spiny. *Lepismium* species are primarily found in Bolivia and Argentina, with a few outliers in Brazil. This plant was first described in 1893, but it has only been known by this name since 1983. (Dick Kohlschreiber)

*Passiflora loefgrenii* (Passifloraceae). No common name. Southeastern Brazil (Sao Paulo). This species was first collected in 1991, but was not named until 1997. The flowers are quite attractive with showy reflexed red-pink sepals and blue-violet corona. Deeply three-lobed green leaves have a matte finish. (Jorge Ochoa)

*Stachys coccinea* 'Hot Spot Coral' (Lamiaceae). Hot Spot Coral Betony. The species is native to Arizona, New Mexico, Texas, and Mexico. Plants should reach 3 feet wide and 18 inches tall. Flower stalks appear from late spring to early summer and carry numerous coral-red flowers that are especially attractive to hummingbirds. The crenate-margined grey leaves are attractive throughout the year. Plants are best grown in moist, compost-enriched soil in full sun or in partial shade. This selection is said to be deer and rabbit resistant and was made in Arizona by High Country Gardens. (Dick Kohlschreiber)

- Photographs by Wendy Gault