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GREEN SHEET

Southern California Horticultural Society

JANUARY 2007 PLANT FORUM NOTES

Compiled by Susan C. Eubank

Thank you to all who brought plants to the January 2007 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, described (or listed) in the Society’s **Selected Plants for Southern California Gardens** (2000), were shown: *Eranthemum pulchellum*, *Hatiora salicornioides*, *Helleborus argutifolius*, *Isoplexis canariensis*, *Leptospermum scoparium*, *Lobelia laxiflora*, *Nigella damascena*, *Pandorea pandorana*, *Ribes malvaceum*, *R. m.* ‘Dancing Tassels,’ *Rosa banksiae*, *Senna artemisioides*, and *Symphoricarpos albus*.

The identity of the following plants could not be completely ascertained: several *Abutilon* cultivars hybridized by Gerry Rowitch at the Sculpture Gardens in Venice, a *Dombeya* sp., and a *Kalanchoe* sp.

Information in this compilation was gleaned and condensed from the Plant Forum exhibit cards, numerous sources at the Arboretum Library at the Los Angeles County Arboretum & Botanic Garden and various internet sites. For specific sources of information on the plants, please contact me at the Arboretum Library at 626-821-3213.

Camellia lutchuensis (Theaceae) – Exhibited by Peggy Stewart

This camellia is native to the woods and forests of the Ryukyu Islands of Japan, which include Okinawa. The specific epithet is a previous English version of the islands’ name. It has also been found in mountainous Guangxi, China and Taiwan. The flowers are small and white with gold stamens. This has been called the most fragrant camellia. It is used frequently in hybridizing in attempts to produce fragrant cultivars. The shrub is small, but will grow to 6 feet tall in time.

Camellia ‘Snowdrop’ (Theaceae) – Exhibited by Peggy Stewart

This camellia is a hybrid from *C. fraterna* developed in Australia. The shrub is open and upright and the flowers are white with pink edges with either single or semi-double miniature petals. It has a long bloom season and an entire stem can be in bloom at the same time. The flowers are also fragrant.

Cordyline fruticosa ‘Black Magic’ (Dracaenaceae) – Exhibited by Eileen Fiumara

This cultivar has dark foliage. It looks better in cold weather than other cultivars. The foliage color is darker in the shade. The plant will grow 4 to 6 feet tall and 2 to 3 feet wide. It is frost tender for Eileen in Sherman Oaks.

Daphne odora ‘Leucanthe’ (Thymelaeaceae) – Exhibited by Bart O’Brien

This cultivar has dark green leaves and very fragrant cream-colored, pink-backed blossoms.



Helleborus lividus (Ranunculaceae) – Exhibited by Bart O’Brien
This hellebore is native to the Spanish island Majorca. It is still extant in its native habitat, but rare and only seen in rock crevices and dense forest thickets. It is the easiest hellebore to grow from seed and the 10 inch plant has deep green and sometimes purplish leaves with silver marbling. A germinated seed will bloom in 18 months. The 1 to 2 inch flowers are creamy-greenish with a little pink or purple and bloom in a cluster of 5 to 10 flowers. The flower buds will freeze at 10° F. Bart’s experience with the plant is that it blooms heavily; “sometimes too much.”

- Photograph by Elizabeth Eubank

Lathyrus odoratus Grandiflora type (Fabaceae) Sweet Pea – Exhibited by Jane Coogan Beer
Henry Eckford, the father of the sweet pea, is credited with calling his sweet peas “grandifloras” collectively although the literature of the time does not reflect that. He worked between 1876 and 1904 to improve the sweet pea, changing the structure of the flower and the plant, creating almost all the colors that exist today and retaining the fragrance all along. The group was called grandiflora, because the flowers were so much larger than the material he began with. The sweet pea became so popular at that time that a prize for the best sweet pea exhibited in the Crystal Palace (London) during the sweet pea show was £5000.

Matthiola incana (Brassicaceae) Stock – Anonymous

This fast maturing bedding plant native to the Mediterranean is known for its fragrant flowers. It is a winter blooming plant in southern California because temperatures below 65 degrees are required for bud set. The plant is self-fertile and has naturalized in wetlands along the coast of California. There are documented specimens of escaped plants in El Segundo Dunes near the Los Angeles International Airport.

Rosa ‘Julia Child’ (Rosaceae) – Exhibited by Carol Norcross

This 2006 All-American Rose Award Winner was developed by Tom Carruth of Weeks Roses and chosen by Julia Child shortly before her death. It is a floribunda rose with “butter-gold” petals and a licorice and spice fragrance. The plant is disease resistant, has green-glossy foliage and will grow 3 to 4 feet high. In Long Beach, Carol says it performs wonderfully although it has smaller flowers than advertised.



Salvia discolor (Lamiaceae) Andean Silver Leaf Sage – Exhibited by Joan Seidel

This is a sticky plant, with white, woolly stems; green leaves on top, silver gray underneath and with spectacular dark purple, indigo or almost black flowers nestling in silver calyces. The nursery trade considers it “tender.” It was first collected by Europeans in a moist river valley at 6000 feet in the Huancabamba region of Peru. That region has subsequently been declared a center for plant biodiversity by the Smithsonian Institution. Geological forces in the Andes created isolated low ranges and basins here. The annual mean precipitation can range from 2 and 1/2 to 9 feet and at higher elevations the mountains are covered with a cloud forest. The area most likely boasts 2000 to 2500 species of plants.

- Photograph by Paul Martin