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GREEN SHEET

Southern California Horticultural Society

AUGUST 2007 PLANT FORUM NOTES

Compiled by Susan C. Eubank

Thank you to all who brought plants to the August 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 in August: *Aechmea fendleri*, *A. gamosepala*, *Anisacanthus quadrifolius* var. *wrightii*, *Berberis thunbergii* ‘Atropurpurea’, *Clarkia unguiculata*, *Hydrangea quercifolia*, *Manihot esculenta* and *Setaria palmifolia*.

The identity of the following plants could not be completely ascertained: two *Protea* spp. and an unnamed shrub rose hybrid.

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.

Aechmea caudata (Bromeliaceae) – Exhibited by Jim Jaeger

This is an epiphytic and terrestrial bromeliad from the states of Espirito Santo, São Paulo, Paraná and Santa Catarina, Brazil. It grows from sea level to 2400 feet in partial shade in the forests. Its flower spikes can grow to 3 feet tall and the flower petals are yellow.

Aechmea mulfordii (Bromeliaceae) – Exhibited by Jim Jaeger

This name has become very confused in cultivation. The plant was first described in 1970 and has been redescribed through keys published in botany and bromeliad journals as well as online. It continues to be applied to plants that are really *A. callichroma* and other so called ‘gravisia’ complex *Aechmea* spp. True *A. mulfordii* is native to Bahia and Pernambuco, Brazil, growing on the ground in moist places within a 1/4 mile from the ocean. Its scape is over 2 feet tall with an erect flower. The floral bracts are orange to yellow and the petals are yellow.



Clematis ‘Etoile Violette’ (Ranunculaceae) – Exhibited by Robin Corwin

This is a hybrid from the *C. viticella* group. *C. v.* is native to southern Europe so it is somewhat better adapted to the Mediterranean climate than some other clematis. It has large deep-purple flowers with prominent yellow stamens that bloom through the summer, particularly if sheared after the first flush of bloom. It is deciduous and prefers to be kept moist in well-drained soil. With pruning it can be kept to 10 to 12 feet; without pruning it will grow up to 20 feet, but it blooms on new growth. (Pictured at left.)

Clematis ‘Madame Julia Correvon’ (Ranunculaceae) – Exhibited by Robin Corwin

This *C. viticella* hybrid was introduced in the French nursery trade in 1900. It was lost to cultivation and rediscovered at Hidcote Manor Garden in England. Its large, red flowers are distinctive because, as they age, they transform from a flat open blossom to twisted petals that show their gray undersides as well as the red. Pruned, it will stay 6 to 8 feet in height, but can grow up to 12 unpruned. Since it blooms on new wood, a hard pruning induces more flowering.



Clematis ‘Venosa Violacea’ (Ranunculaceae) – Exhibited by Robin Corwin
This is a third hybrid from the *C. viticella* group. It was introduced in the French nursery trade in 1883. Its unusual flower changes as each flush proceeds through summer. The purple flowers have white centers on the petals with purple veins going through the white. As the flushes continue through the summer, the white with the veining becomes more prominent on each petal. The vine will reach 8 to 10 feet. Like the other two cultivars listed above it is reliably disease-resistant. (Pictured at left.)

Cuphea llavea (Bat Face Cuphea) (Lythraceae) – Exhibited by Dick Kohlschreiber

This subshrub grows throughout western Mexico at an altitude ranging from 3000-7500 feet. It produces many purple tubular flowers that have two erect red petals that could be construed as “ears” with the purple tips completing the “bat face.” It is happy in full sun and Dick says it requires regular water, although in Texas it is considered “drought-tolerant.” Frost in the high 20s will

kill the tops; the roots appear to be hardy to the low 20s.

Dahlia ‘Ferncliff Illusion’ (Asteraceae) – Exhibited by Jeanne Anderson
Ferncliff Gardens is a dahlia specialty nursery that has been in business since 1920. *D.* ‘Ferncliff Illusion’ was developed in 1994. It has 8 inch, white blooms with violet tips. (Pictured at right.)



Hibiscus moscheutos (Malvaceae) – Exhibited by Dick Kohlschreiber
This southeastern U.S. native grows in wetlands and creek edges in mountains, piedmont and coastal plains. The plant can grow to 8 feet tall and 5 feet wide with large blossoms that can be red, pink, orange, yellow, white or bicolor. It will grow in full sun if kept wet and will also bloom in partial shade. It blooms from mid-summer to fall. Each bloom lasts only a day. It is not drought-tolerant and will leaf scorch when “dry.” Dick’s example is probably a hybrid.

Manihot utilissima (Bitter cassava) (Euphorbiaceae) – Exhibited by Don Suter
This Brazilian native is a food staple throughout the tropics. The fibrous flour called farine is processed by grating the tubers, squeezing the poison out as it ferments, and heating the pulp (flour) until it is completely dry. Various products are made from the flour. The “bitter cassava” is distinguished from sweet tapioca by the color of the roots. Bitter roots are light; sweet are dark.

Sansevieria trifasciata ‘Bantel’s Sensation’ (Agavaceae) – Exhibited by Pam Waterman
This *S. trifasciata* cultivar is distinguished by its variegation and large stems from 12 to 20 inches.

Stapelia gettleffii (Asclepiadaceae) – Exhibited by Laura Bauer
This succulent is native to the Transvaal of South Africa and possibly Botswana. It distinguishes itself from other *Stapelia* spp. with long, very hairy leaves that remain on the plant clinging to the stem. Its flowers can grow up to 7 inches wide with purple and yellow undulating background covered in purple hairs. The flowers smell like carrion.



Vitex rotundifolia (Verbenaceae) – Exhibited by Joan Seidel
This is a prostrate, mounding, round-leaved vitex with blue flowers. It is native to eastern Asia and Korea. Joan grows it in full sun in the Hollywood Hills and it gets 1 to 4 feet high and 6 to 8 feet wide. It is considered invasive on beach dunes in the Carolinas where it was planted for dune stabilization, but hasn’t been found to be a weed here. (Pictured at left.)