



October 2013 Meeting

Wednesday, October 9, 7:30 p.m. (doors open at 7:00)

Helen Popper, Author, California Native Plant Society, Santa Clara

“Maintaining Native Plants Throughout the Seasons”

Every year, and in every native garden, our activities change.

They reflect the pace of our lives, the vagaries of weather, and the garden’s transformation. Yet, there’s a rhythm to native gardening in California, a rhythm that reflects our wilder surroundings.

Each month and each season in the garden has its characteristic chores and delights. Helen will share this sense of rhythm that guides us through a year in the native garden.

Helen's book is the first month-by-month guide to gardening with native plants that follows a unique, nontraditional seasonal rhythm. In this book she tells us how to use native plants in traditional garden styles, including Japanese, herb, and formal gardens, and recommends places for viewing natives within California.

November 2013 Meeting

Wednesday, November 13, Dylan Hannon, Curator, Conservatory and Tropical Collections, Huntington Gardens, San Marino, California, “Bulbs for the Collector”.

MEETING LOCATION Christ Episcopal Church, Parish Hall, 1040 Border Road, Los Altos. Doors open at 7 p.m. and meetings begin at 7:30.

You are invited to join our October speaker, Helen Popper, author of “California Native Gardening: A Month-by-Month Guide”, for **dinner on October 9** at 5:30 p.m. at the lovely Italian restaurant, Bella Vita, located at 376 First Street, Los Altos. There is ample parking near the entrance. Please contact Rosalie Shepherd to confirm: shep8283@comcast.net or 650-321-8283.

Would you like to **sponsor a lecture** for the WHS that is of particular interest to you? It would be much appreciated! Please call Pat Knight at 650-941-6136.

Succulent Orbs!



Leslie Dean: This succulent orb will fill out in the next several months. To create one, start by making a metal frame (like the ones for succulent wreaths) and then completely cover it with moss, held in place with fishing line. Next, poke holes in the moss and insert the succulents. Use wire to keep the succulents on the bottom half in place. You also can use wire if there is not enough stem to stick into the moss. Not too hard! With more succulents, you needn’t wait for them to fill in. This one is about the size of a volleyball but you can make them smaller.

Roberta Barnes: Are you interested in making or learning how to make these succulent spheres? We are considering having a workshop for this project. There would be a donation to WHS for materials and each participant would be asked to bring cuttings to share. Please contact Roberta Barnes if you are interested: robertabarnes2011@yahoo.com or 650-949-0377.

Photo: Leslie Dean, July 2013.

Western Hort News

~ It's the Western Horticultural Society's 50th Anniversary ~

WANTED: Your Remembrances and Stories!

Plant-based, human-based, or some combination thereof ...

Fame! Fortune! Your Name in Lights! Well, not so much fortune, but publication fame in the newsletter, which has worldwide reach since it is archived on our website! And as we all know, what's on the internet stays on the internet for all time.

We know some people are shy about sending in writing—don't be, there are several people on the Board who would be delighted to help out, polishing or editing or reviewing what you write. What we need are your invaluable memories and fun stories. Consider it!

Send your stories to the editor of this very newsletter (Marianne Mueller, mrm@sonic.net or 333 Kingsley Ave., Palo Alto, 94301) or to any member of the Board. See page 3 for a list of Board members.



Garden Art in Marcia Donahue's garden. Photo: Leslie Dean, July 2013.

Volunteer to help staff the WHS Table at Yamagami's Community

Gardening Society Day, Sat Oct 26, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

Come meet members of several local garden-related groups, including the Santa Clara County Master Gardeners, the local chapter of California Rare Fruit Growers, the Mediterranean Garden Society, Western Horticultural Society and more! No matter how limited or narrow your garden experience is, these groups make wonderful contacts for your specialized questions. You can also help introduce the public to Western Hort, tell 'em what we're all about, and invite them to upcoming meetings. And, no doubt, chat with them about plants and answer their questions! Contact Rosalie Shepherd to volunteer to staff our table: shep8283@comcast.net or 650-321-8283.

Plant Table

Our October Plant Table will be stocked with plants donated by our membership. Please consider bringing native plants for the table as our speaker will be talking about maintaining native gardens. However, all plants and garden related objects are welcome! A big thanks goes to Nicholas Staddon for the Monrovia plants he donated for our September Plant Table. We had a silent action for these interesting plants. Also, thanks to the WHS members who brought in plants for last month's Plant Table. We had an interesting selection of plants and containers!

California Academy of Sciences

Green Roof (left)

After nearly a decade in the making, Renzo Piano's California Academy of Sciences opened in 2008 – and Inhabitat took a sneak peak at that time inside the incredible institution. A crowning achievement of sustainable architecture, the Academy houses 38,000 live animals and features an aquarium, a natural history museum, a living rainforest, a planetarium, and world-class research and education programs – all housed under a 2.5 acre green roof. Check out inhabitat.com for a tour of the museum's many splendors, and more great photos. Photo and caption: inhabitat.com, September 2008



Western Hort News

Do you garden on rooftops—or are considering it? Or need proof it is worth it?

You won't want to miss CitiesAlive San Francisco, October 23-26, 2013 (see citiesalive.org). One hundred experts will speak on trailblazing green roof and wall projects, which also develop new business opportunities along the way. The event features tours and half-day and day-long trainings (up to 16 CE credit hours), along with networking events at Flora Grubb Gardens and the California Academy of Sciences, home to a groundbreaking native rooftop garden. And of course, there will be a magnificent exhibition. Pacific Horticulture Society is a Partner for this excellent event. Register at citiesalive.org.

The rooftop gardening movement was driven first by hardscape and a lot of people who didn't really understand the planting—they chose the wrong plants, or plants that needed a huge amount of maintenance. Or they didn't address situations where runoff was an issue. Pac Hort is looking more carefully at rooftop plant requirements and their care, and asking landscapers and gardeners to be creative.

Look for a story in the next Pacific Horticulture magazine about a fellow in Switzerland trying to preserve wild orchids. Their habitats were being destroyed and he started out planting them on roofs instead! He's made huge progress, and some orchid seeds are finding their way to roof tops. I have a mental picture of all those poor orchids dying out on the ground, but somehow due to the kindness of some humans, have now found a habitat about twelve feet up! Let's move towards more resilient buildings and communities through living architecture. Be part of the growing movement to ***design and secure urban resiliency through living architecture: food—water—energy***, the timely conference theme that holds growing relevance across America.

And whether you can make CitiesAlive or not, join Pacific Horticulture Society and Flora Grubb Gardens for an evening of inspiration and celebration on October 22, 5:30 p.m.-7:30 p.m., at Flora Grubb Gardens, 1634 Jerrold Ave, San Francisco. Just in time for the CitiesAlive Green Roof & Wall Conference, we're launching our special green roof themed fall issue of Pacific Horticulture and celebrating the publication of "The Professional Design Guide to Green Roofs" by Karla Dakin, Lisa Lee Benjamin, and Mindy Pantiel (Timber Press 2013). See more at pacifichorticulture.org.

Read more about green roofs and walls in the new issue of Living Architecture Monitor, livingarchitecturemonitor.com, and of course in the upcoming issue of Pacific Horticulture magazine. ~Carol Moholt, Executive Director, Pacific Horticulture Society

New Plants of 2013: Notes from the September 2013 talk

Our first meeting of the 2013-2014 season started with a rousing talk by Nicholas Staddon of Monrovia Nursery. As Director of New Plants, he showed how plants are propagated on an industrial scale, from tissue culture to seeding to potting up cuttings. Monrovia has several facilities where they grow and test plants by the hundreds and thousands. Nicholas was always happy to answer questions along the way and often gave examples and used humor to illustrate his answers. His talk included great photos of plants from Aralia 'Variegata Camouflage' to Yucca 'Bright Star'. Nicholas gave us a tip that using rice hulls or almond hulls as a top dressing on pots controlled liverwort, the bad boy of potted weeds. He suggested that Agapanthus 'Baby Pete' is a good replacement for 'Peter Pan'. A new grafted Gardenia 'Aimee' is tougher and tolerates poor soils. And peony lovers will want Itoh Peonies called 'Smith Opus 1 & 2' with enormous flowers. We are still not sure if his wife carries a gun and/or rides a horse. For further information go to monrovia.com/plant-catalog/exceptional-new-plants.php. ~Richard Tiede, WHS President

WANTED: Your short articles (or long!) ... about favorite plants, gardens, practices, etc. Richard Tiede is working on one about salvias. Nancy Schramm writes fabulous "Plant of the Month" articles along with occasional book reviews and (like this month) a write-up of a garden she visited. And how about that short note by Leslie Dean on how to make Succulent Orbs?! (See page 1.) Send submissions to Marianne Mueller, mrm@sonic.net or 333 Kingsley Ave., Palo Alto, 94301. Want to chat about possible ideas for articles? Contact Marianne! I guarantee the rest of us will love to read your notes. ~Marianne Mueller, Editor, Western Hort News

Marcia Donahue's Garden This month I'd like to tell you about a garden where plants, sculpture and the imagination and hard work of one woman has created magic. All that and it's not even in a different time zone, although you could say that Berkeley is itself a different time and place. Marcia Donahue and her garden have been featured in any number of magazines, newspapers, and blogs, but after my own first visit to 3017 Wheeler Street, all I can say is that it is so much more than can be put into words. It's a jungle with order, an art gallery with living walls. But I can see that you are confused, so let me try to explain. Marcia Donahue is a sculptor who has been creating her garden in the middle of Berkeley for over twenty years. Professionally she works in clay, and her art is most at home when placed in a garden. And it can be found in gardens both public and private across the country. Marcia is also a "devotee of flora" (it says so right on her card) and her garden is absolutely full of plants. But you have to look twice, sometimes, to realize that some of the plants really aren't. Living plants, that is. And that's because Marcia has filled the corners and spaces between plants with sculpture, and they are perfect companions.



Water plants and garden art in Marcia's garden.
Photo: Mary Kaye, July 2013.

There are stalks of bamboo...except that they are made from stacked cylinders of clay. There is a bowl of bulbs with newly sprouting tips, except that when you look again, these bulbs aren't going to get planted and they won't ever rot, because, once again, they are formed from clay. Some of Marcia's latest creations are (clay) succulents that are content in even the deepest shade.

Other inhabitants of the garden include bees with their own semi-private garden room for their hives, and goldfish all grown up because their pond is deep enough to thwart even the most persistent raccoon. And then there are resident chickens who come when Marcia calls, and run around eating orange begonia flowers when she doesn't.



Underside of the fabulous Alocasia leaf.
Photo: Leslie Dean, July 2013.

However, my plant nerd heart was won over completely by the amazing variety of the plants gathered into this fairly normal size garden. There is a mayapple (*Podophyllum*) with ten inch wide maple shaped leaves on stems that grow straight out of the ground—not just green, but with dark green patterned markings all over. Another variegated plant looked like an elephant ear relative (*Alocasia*) with striking white markings between each of the leaf veins. There was some type of palm (Oh, I wish I'd taken notes) that in silhouette was a perfect 'V' shape with fringe on the top. Bright pink Cordylines were paired with—what?—are those oversized pink clay feet? Marcia keeps her large pond clean in part with a biofilter created by planting an *Acorus* in an enormous pot, and then pumping the pond water through that same pot. Ingenious to say the least. Everywhere we looked (I toured the garden with three friends) we saw plants that we had to ask each other "What is that one?" or "I didn't think you could grow that in the shade."

This magical garden is open every Sunday from 1:00 p.m.—5:00 p.m. Also open Sundays, and just a few blocks away is The Dry Garden nursery at 6556 Shattuck Ave, Berkeley. I guarantee that you will leave both places inspired to create your own place of magic. I did. ~*Nancy Schramm*

28 Years Ago

Western Hort Society met for the second time at their new meeting place in Los Altos on October 9, 1985 (with many reminders of the new day of the week and different location) to hear Harland Hand talk about “Creating Micro-climates in Your Garden”. The newsletter continues, “The benefit of this technique is that it allows you to grow more kinds of plants.” I personally cannot imagine any more seductive invitation to a talk than to tell plant nerds that they will be hearing about ways to grow more plants!

Harland Hand was one of our local treasures—a garden designer “with specialty in gardens for plant collectors.” His half-acre garden on a steep hillside in El Cerrito had been featured in *American Horticulturist*, *Sunset* books, and in the *Time/Life* book “Rock and Water Gardens.” He wrote articles about his garden in the Winter 1976 and Spring 1978 issues of *Pacific Horticulture*. In just a bit of serendipity, I recently ran across pictures in my mom’s photo album of a WHS field trip on April 20, 1975. The group visited Hadley Osborne’s garden in El Cerrito, Harland Hand’s garden in El Cerrito, and the Blake Estate (home of the President of UC Berkeley) in Kensington. Anyone remember that trip?

The plant notes reflect the fact that the WHS membership is truly interested in growing new plants and sharing the knowledge. Bill Duncan grew some of the “newly offered double variety” of *Impatiens*, Betsy Clebsch showed off a chance hybrid of *Salvia rutilans* grown (and shared) by Jon Dixon, as well as the annual *Leonotis nepetifolia* that she had grown from seed that Elizabeth Garbett gathered in Mexico and gave her, and Gerda Isenberg displayed “a four-foot frond of *Woodwardia orientalis*” and said that “it’s so easy to grow it from its buds.” ~*Nancy Schramm*

Horticultural Calendar, October-November 2013

Fall Vegetable Seedling Sale from UCCE Master Gardeners of Santa Clara County Saturday, October 5, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m., at the Annual Prusch Harvest Fair & Exposition, 647 S. King Rd., San Jose. See mastergardeners.org/fall-vegetable-seedling-sale for plant list and description of the many activities at the Prusch Harvest Fair. There are several other great plant sales, including ornamental and (even more!) vegetable plants. Don’t miss the MG Brag Table of harvest, jams & pickles & salsas...

Twelve Months of Native Color in the Garden Saturday, October 12, 1 p.m. – 3 p.m. at the Master Gardener Sunnyvale Teaching and Demonstration Garden, 433 Charles St., Sunnyvale. See mastergardeners.org/events for description and direction. Free.

CNPS Native Plant Sale Saturday, October 19, 10 a.m. – 3 p.m., Hidden Villa Ranch, 26870 Moody Rd., Los Altos. For plant list and more info, see cnps-scv.org.

Yamagami’s Community Gardening Society Day Saturday, October 26, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. See page 2 for more info.

Pruning Shrubs to Maintain Natural Form and Beauty Saturday, November 2, 10 a.m. – 11 a.m. Speaker: Roberta Barnes. At the Master Gardener Palo Alto Demonstration Garden, 851 Center Dr., Palo Alto. Followed by Open Garden. See mastergardeners.org/events for description and directions. Free.

Western Horticultural Society

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Other Board Members: Liz Calhoon, Chris Egan, Abby Garner, Virginia Kean, Wendy van der Linden, Judy Wong, and Katie Wong.

To contact us, please send email to info@westernhort.org, or contact Chris Egan at 650-948-4614, or send mail to Western Horticulture Society, PO Box 60507, Palo Alto, CA, 94306.

About membership in Western Hort:

To join or renew, send your name, address, phone number and a check made out to “Western Horticultural Society” to PO Box 620673, Woodside, CA 94062-0673.

Membership Rates: A one-year membership (Sep-Aug) includes four issues of *Pacific Horticulture* magazine. Regular membership is \$35, Sustaining is \$45, Contributing is \$60 and Plant Lover is \$100+. We have also added a Family membership of \$50 for two or more members at the same address, and a Student rate of \$20.

Please visit our website at westernhort.org for a membership form.

Newsletter Submissions and Address Changes

Please send info for the November 2013 newsletter by October 18 to Marianne Mueller, mrm@sonic.net or 650-326-2029.

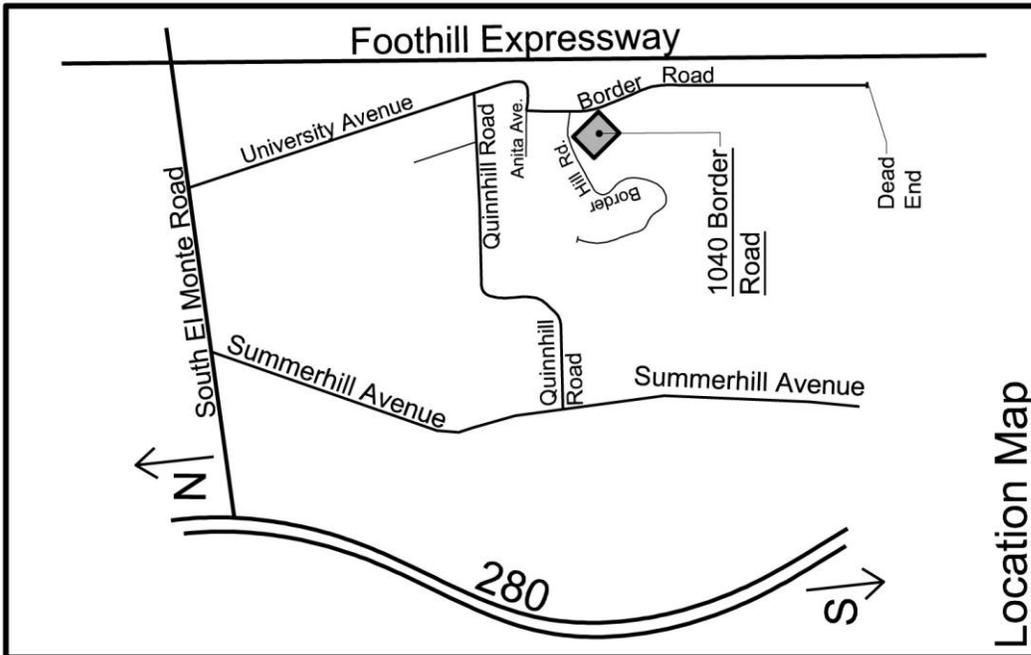
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PO Box 60507
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VISIT US AT WESTERNHORT.ORG



Location Map

Western Horticultural Society
Monthly Meetings
Christ Episcopal Church
Parish Hall
1040 Border Road, Los Altos

Western Horticultural Society ~ October 2013