



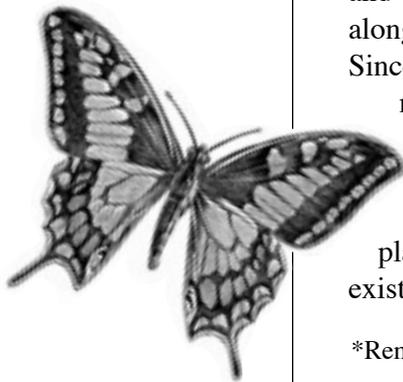
Sacramento Perennial Plant Club Newsletter

MAY/JUNE 2013

FOUNDED IN 1988 • CELEBRATING 25 YEARS

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MAY PROGRAM SPEAKER

Julia Moore

Dragonfly Peony Farm

Growing Peonies

THURSDAY—MAY 23, 2013* • 7:00 PM

SHEPARD GARDEN AND ARTS CENTER

In an enchanting and whimsical forested Sierra foothill setting, overlooking the Mokelumne River in Wilseyville, Julia Moore operates Dragonfly Peony Farm, one of only a handful of peony farms in the entire state. Julia's "Coral Charm" peony has taken best-of-show and other varieties have won multiple blue ribbons. Among gardeners and landscapers there is a growing awareness of the peony: a lovely old-fashioned, cold-hardy plant that produces large, flamboyant flowers each spring and carries a legacy dating back to ancient China. Colors range from pure white to varying shades of pink, lavender, yellow, coral and red. Julia will share her knowledge of planting, growing and caring for peonies. If you thought peonies would not do well in the valley, think again, Julia grew peonies in Fresno and says they do very well in the valley, just give them a little afternoon shade.

JUNE PROGRAM SPEAKER

Taylor Lewis

Cornflower Farms

Native Plants

THURSDAY—JUNE 27, 2013 • 7:00 PM

SHEPARD GARDEN AND ARTS CENTER

Taylor Lewis graduated from UC Davis with a degree in Environmental Horticulture and Urban Forestry. In 2010, he joined Cornflower Farms as sales manager bringing along a nursery management background and over 15 years of experience in sales. Since 1981, Cornflower Farms has been dedicated to propagating and growing plants native to California and the western United States for the wholesale nursery trade, landscaping industry and restoration/revegetation projects. Many of these plants are specific to Sacramento. Taylor will talk about how to use beautiful natives in our gardens whether you are redoing a garden using native plants or looking for some low water, easy care native plants to add to your existing garden.

*Remember there are five Thursdays in May; we meet on the fourth Thursday.

Calendar

May 4

Sierra Oaks and Carmichael
Garden Tours

May 6

Deadheading at Dusk
Historic Rose Garden
6:30 p.m.

May 8

25th Anniversary Celebration
Maple Rock Gardens, Penryn
10 a.m.

May 14

SPPC Board Meeting
Barbara Lane-Piert (916-362-5337)
5 p.m.

May 18

Beneficial Insects Workshop
Fair Oaks Horticulture Center
8:30 a.m.–11:30 a.m.

May 23

May Meeting
Julia Moore, *Growing Peonies*
7 p.m.

June 3

Deadheading at Dusk
Historic Rose Garden
6:30 p.m.

June 11

SPPC Board Meeting
Sharon Patrician (916-455-8166)
5 p.m.

June 15

Open Garden
Fair Oaks Horticulture Center
8:30 a.m.–11:30 a.m.

June 27

June Meeting
Taylor Lewis, *Native Plants*
7 p.m.

July 8

Deadheading at Dusk
Historic Rose Garden
6:30 p.m.

July 27

Garden Tour
Lake of the Sky Garden Club

August 3

Harvest Day
Fair Oaks Horticulture Center
8:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m.

August 5

Deadheading at Dusk
Historic Rose Garden
6:30 p.m.

President's Message

Saul Wiseman

In May, my wife and I will be celebrating our 50th wedding anniversary with a trip to New York City. We will visit some gardens on the Garden Conservancy Open Days Program in the Hamptons on Long Island and also in Westchester County above New York City. I will not be back in time for the May general meeting.

There are Garden Conservancy Open Day Programs here in Northern California for the next three months:

- San Francisco East Bay on May 11—Oakland, Berkeley, Albany and El Cerrito
- San Francisco Peninsula on May 18—Los Altos, Atherton and Palo Alto
- Marin County on June 1—Kentfield including Robin Parer's garden

For details, visit The Garden Conservancy Open Day Program web site at: <http://www.gardenconservancy.org/opendays>.

Election of Club Officers

According to the By-Laws, election of club officers for the Board of Directors shall be held at the May meeting. Current president Saul Wiseman, vice-president Wayne Martinson, treasurer Pat McKnight, and secretary Barbara Lane-Piert are standing for reelection.

*A third garden has been added to the May 4
Sierra Oaks and Carmichael Garden Tour*

Pauline and Irvin Faria's Garden

SATURDAY—MAY 4, 2013

3781 DELL ROAD, CARMICHAEL

Details will be handed out at the first garden.

Enjoy this enchanting private garden filled with dogwoods, azaleas and beautiful Japanese maples.



Don't miss this year's

Harvest Day

Saturday, August 3, 2013

8:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Fair Oaks Horticulture Center

Sponsored by the Sacramento County Master Gardeners, *Harvest Day* is Sacramento's biggest one-day gardening event featuring speakers, demonstrations, educational booths, open gardens, produce tasting, a plant clinic and more. Bring your questions to the Fair Oaks Horticulture Center and enjoy!

Spring Plant Sale a Huge Success

I want to thank very sincerely the members who so generously contributed to making the Spring Sale so successful. Forgive me if I omit anyone's name:

Emma Ahart out did herself by producing such a varied and lovely selection of plants. The green house really made a big difference. We appreciate all your hard work.

Also, many thanks to Saul and Julie Wiseman, Daisy Mah, Jeanne Christopherson, Beverly Shilling, Pat McKnight, Deborah Renfrew, Elizabeth Jones, Bobby Frieze, Mae Ferral, Wayne Martinson, Barbara Monroe, Margaret Cossey, Diana Morris, Lee Perone, Sharon Patrician, Anita Clevenger, Charlene Durant, Marcia and Bill Leddy, Cheryl McDonald and Peggy Gerick.

Thank all of you very, very much.

—*Madeleine Mullins*

Many Benefit from Annual Vendor Sale



Our annual vendor sale this March was a success for all involved, the vendors, the gardening public, and our members.

The sale attracts vendors from around the Greater Sacramento area including some of our flagship regulars: Geraniaceae from Kentfield, Morningsun Herb Farm from Vacaville, and Golden Pond from Loomis.

For the gardening public, the SPPC provides a public service by bringing a wide variety of vendors together here in Sacramento.

Also, we provide a display of flowering plants at the end of March in wine bottles. We provided a large audience who enjoyed hearing speaker Nicholas Staddon from Monrovia Nursery.

For the club, the sale gets members working together. This year **Noelle Anderson**, who did a great job, was our rookie chairperson. She got lots of help from those who got involved. Hopefully, she will continue next year as co-chairperson with someone else joining.

In my opinion, the club lost a few dollars on the past sale. We don't do the sale to make money. We do the sale to benefit the vendors and as a service to the Sacramento gardening community. We shall continue.

—*Saul Wiseman*

Examples of new plant introductions from Monrovia Nursery. From top: Double Take™ Orange Storm Flowering Quince, Wild Swan™ Hybrid Anemone, and Sun Stripe® Agapanthus



ONE MORE CHANCE PLANT SALE

Interested in buying a few more plants, including dahlias, before the weather turns too hot? For those PPC members who are "babysitting" leftover plants from the spring sale, here's one more chance to lighten your load.

Bring those flats of plants that are looking for a good home to the June meeting. Prices will be the same as those sold at the recent spring sale.



Welcome to the following new members:

Alice Bauman
Corinne Byers
Annie Cook
Diedre Ferrari
Roberta Hopkins
Leslie Hurlburt
Faith Lambert
David Luscher
Caitlin Mullins
Jeannie Ross
Nancy Simpson

SPPC Board Meeting. The next Perennial Plant Club Board of Directors meeting will be held May 14th at the home of **Barbara Lane-Piert** (916-362-5337). The June board meeting will be held June 11 at the home of **Sharon Patrician** (916-455-8166) As always, board meetings are open to all members. Meetings begin at 5 p.m. and start with a potluck dinner—informative *and* delicious.

There will be no general meeting in July and August. The next meeting is Thursday, September 26th. The next newsletter will be the September/October issue. Have a wonderful summer and take time to sit down, have a cool drink, and enjoy your garden.

**Lake of the Sky Garden Tour
Saturday July 27, 2013
10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Lake Tahoe, California**

On July 27th, view gardens in the Truckee and Lake Tahoe area. Get away from the July heat and tour some gardens in the cool mountain air. Proceeds from this tour will fund scholarships to encourage study in landscaping, horticulture, forestry or environmental science and up to \$6,000 in grants to local community projects.

The last few years the Lake Tahoe garden tour has sold out at 500 tickets. Check the Lake of the Sky Garden Club website for ordering ticket information.

(<http://lakesky.homestead.com/>)

ONLINE PETITION

Daisy is Retiring: What Will Happen to the WPA Rock Garden?

Sign the petition urging the Sacramento Department of Parks and Recreation to maintain the garden's beauty.

by Jeff Weir

(SPPC member and WPA Rock Garden fan)

The WPA Rock Garden in William Land Park is a Sacramento jewel and a neighborhood treasure. Resurrected and then meticulously cared for since 1988 by city employee, and past SPPC President, Daisy Mah, the garden has provided joy, wonder, and tranquility for untold numbers of park visitors and garden lovers. Support of this garden has been one of the SPPC's most important civic projects throughout the years.

Daisy is retiring this October. So . . . what will happen to the WPA Rock Garden?

The maintenance of William Land Park and the WPA Rock Garden is the responsibility of the Sacramento Department of Parks and Recreation. A group called WPARocks is working to make sure the department understands the breadth of support and admiration for the garden in the Land Park community, Sacramento, and beyond. One of the pursuits of WPARocks is a petition, posted on the web site "change.org", to gather signatures and comments from WPA Rock Garden supporters. WPARocks will use this petition to show Sacramento public officials the widespread appreciation for the garden and use the power of numbers to urge the city's parks department to hire a worthy replacement for Daisy and to be proactive in maintaining the garden's beauty and diversity.

The petition states that those signing want the Sacramento Department of Parks and Recreation to know: "(1) *the depth of admiration we have for the WPA Rock Garden and our heartfelt desire that the garden be maintained as Daisy designed it; and (2) our support for a full-time replacement position, or equivalent solution, that provides the horticultural knowledge and labor necessary for the garden to continue to thrive.*"

Please show your support by going to the web site, signing the petition, adding a comment on what the garden means to you, and then urging a friend (or two or three) to do the same.

You can view and sign the petition at:

change.org/petitions/support-the-wpa-rock-garden

WPARocks and the SPPC thank you for your support.

We all thank Daisy for her amazing work over the years, creating and maintaining one of the most beautiful gardens imaginable. We wish her a happy and fulfilled retirement. It is certainly well earned. And what better "retirement gift" could there be than to ensure the future of her efforts.

MAY GARDEN TOURS

SIERRA OAKS AND CARMICHAEL GARDENS

Sue and Ralph Bloomberg's Garden

SATURDAY—MAY 4, 2013

Tour starts at 9:45 a.m.

A map to the second and third garden will be available.

Please be prompt, the tour at this garden ends at 11:00 a.m.

Out of respect for the Bloomberg's privacy, no photography is allowed.

In 1986 Sue and Ralph purchased their house. The garden had "great bones." Renovations and transformations began and today an elegant garden with a collector's eye for art and form await you. As you wander around this planter's delight you will be astounded by the lush growth, the mature shrubs and trees, the fountains, the precious stonework and the works of art.

Approaching the front of the house a curved pathway leads to the back garden gate. Clipped boxwood of various sizes and shapes surround lush plantings. A bed of many varieties of hydrangea, a bed of hybrid tea roses, flowering dogwoods, crape myrtle, doublefile viburnum, rhododendroms, azalea, a strawberry tree, a climbing rose, quince and citrus lead the way.

As the garden gate is opened a patio, centered by a large chinese elm awaits you. Adjoining the house is a terrace liberally peppered with wall art, stonework and urns of annuals and perennials. An overhanging climbing wisteria of purple and white is supported by multiple stonework columns and the sun filters through on the floor tile. The garden has multiple plantings surrounded by clipped boxwood. Water features abound. A pool with a casita/pool house and the surprise of a contemporary pond with stepping stones. Flamboyant, Koi swim happily in their lush surroundings.

As you journey through a small forest of multiple plants that include bamboo, many shrubs and spring blooms you come upon a wonderful gate, once the elevator doors to a hotel in San Francisco, and enter a secret

garden walled in on all sides. One wall is softened by many types of citrus, another by a wall of jasmine, and another by tall clipped boxwood, an antique gate and six amazing quatrefoils. The inner garden contains an antique, historical French fountain, plantings of peonies, rosemary and other plants all surrounded by low-growing boxwood. Exiting this garden, to your right, you will see more antique garden wall art, an outdoor kitchen and then your gate to leave. Turn around to view the garden in its entirety before leaving and you will observe a work of art that is a joy to behold.

—Barbara Lane-Piert

Emma Ahart's Garden

SATURDAY—MAY 4, 2013

3801 MISSION AVENUE, CARMICHAEL

Emma is an amazing gardener with a 'green thumb' and a true love of gardening; everything in her garden grows large, healthy and beautiful. Farming is in her blood. When she started her garden many years ago she hauled in river soil from the family farm, and has amended it each year with compost and manure. Emma believes that to have a bountiful garden you have to have good soil. Emma's garden surrounds her home and people walk or drive by each month of the year to see what is in bloom.

(Continued on page 6)



MAY GARDEN TOURS

Emma Ahart's Garden

(Continued from page 5)

Emma's vegetable garden of raised beds produces a succession of crops year round that she shares with neighbors and friends; she also donates food to Senior Gleaners. Due to Emma's success with grafting, each of the fruit trees in her garden produces several varieties of fruit. Her flower beds are overflowing with shrubs, perennials, annuals, and bulbs that are colorful year

round. Emma's garden is always changing; something different is blooming, new plants added and with each season a different color pallet. Once you have seen her garden you will want to come back again and again. Emma enjoys having people come by to see her garden and talk about gardening. Maybe you will see some of the plants she propagated and you bought at our plant sales.

25TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

WEDNESDAY—MAY 8, 2013

100 CLARK TUNNEL ROAD, PENRYN

Tour starts at 10:00 a.m.

The 25th anniversary celebration begins at 10:00 a.m. on May 8, 2013.

Many of us have been to Maple Rock Gardens (MRG) before. We know that Scott Paris has redesigned much of the garden. I have not been to the new MRG.

I asked Scott to explain what changes he has made. He would not answer my question. Instead, he stated, "Feel free to take a deep breath when you arrive."

I think we may be in for a surprise.

We will have over 70 club members attending including living past presidents—founder Bob Hamm, Daisy Mah, Barbara Oliva, and Jeannie Ross. Also invited is Debbie Arrington from the *Sacramento Bee*.

I suggest that you arrive early, follow the signs and park, and check in at the entrance. Only those on the list will be admitted.



We will only have one guide for the tour; therefore, some of you may want to wander on your own in the garden.

Sunset magazine has a test garden at zone 9 in MRG. The *Sunset* plants will be identified.

I'm anticipating that the tour will take one and a half hours.

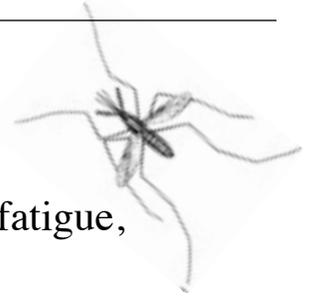
After the tour we will have lunch. Following the lunch, we will have social time, introductions, and a free *Sunset* test garden plant raffle. Feel free to wander the garden after the raffle.

Directions: take I-80 to Sierra College Blvd. Go left at Sierra College heading toward Lincoln. At H193 turn right. At Clark Tunnel Road turn right. Address is 100 Clark Tunnel Road in Penryn.

Please note that Maple Rock is a garden with uneven walking surfaces, stairs and a rising elevation—handicap access is limited and sturdy shoes are a must.

Those Pesky Mosquitoes

by Sharon Patrician



It started with a headache, a fierce, pounding headache followed by fatigue, vomiting, general weakness and lassitude. The flu, right? Wrong.

Beginning in June 2012 and concluding in November 2012, I was stricken with West Nile Virus (WNV). Described by the Center for Disease Control (CDC) as "...a mosquito borne viral disease...producing encephalitis/meningitis type symptoms," a person must be bit by the *Culex* species of mosquito which has fed on an infected bird. At this point, it appears crows, magpies, jays and blackbirds are the most susceptible.

Since I volunteer in the Historic City Cemetery as a gardener, I am exposed to this virus. The cemetery has a large population of American crow, and at least five birds were found dead this summer by cemetery staff. The County Health Department was notified of these birds but did not collect them. It is presumed the virus is present, and I was unlucky enough to contract it.

From June through August I went through various stages. The flu-like symptoms disappeared within two days, but several days later I had difficulty focusing my right eye and I was using the wrong words in my speech. I went to emergency, thinking I had a stroke, but nothing showed up in the MRI. I went home, but the fatigue continued and I became confused about names, dates and events.

I lost my appetite, I did not drink enough fluid and I got no exercise. The second visit to emergency in July was due to increasing disorientation and difficulty with movement. Again, nothing showed up in the x-rays, MRI's, blood tests and urine tests. Most of the time I slept, I could not focus enough to read and I was constantly exhausted.

The last emergency trip in August was due to extreme dehydration and frequent falls. I was admitted to hospital and while there went through two spinal taps. Almost miraculously, the fog I was in and the fatigue went away within five minutes of the first tap. These taps revealed antibodies and white blood cells consistent with an infection, and there was pressure on my brain. The spinal tap relieved those symptoms.

Based on my limited understanding (remember, it took 2-1/2 months to get a real diagnosis), it seems I had been

exposed to WNV and fought it off. I was on the road to healing when they found these cells, but I was physically debilitated which required a month in a rehabilitation facility to regain strength and my short-term memory.

I am now fully recovered, almost have my memory back and no longer need a walker. It turns out I was one of the lucky ones. Other persons my age here in Sacramento did not fare as well. One person died and the other is paralyzed on one side.

Now, for some facts: (1) This disease is usually experienced as a mild flu and most people recover quickly; (2) few people contract the virus to the extreme; (3) the most susceptible groups are infants, persons over age 50 and persons with compromised immune systems; and (4) there is no vaccine and no treatment beyond fluid recovery and relief for headaches.

However, the CDC has some good news. If there are memory white cells (T-lymphocytes) and antibodies in the system, you probably have a lifelong immunity. This means to me I will not need to use an insect repellent when I'm gardening. For others, here are a few tips from the CDC:

- Use an insect repellent containing EPA registered active ingredients
- Try to avoid the early morning and early evening periods when mosquitoes are feeding
- Keep well covered and use a product containing DEET on your clothing
- Keep bird baths and empty swimming pools clean to avoid standing water

And remember: few people contract this virus to the extent I did. It's possible you already have an immunity as an avid gardener. Some common sense and good health go a long way to deter becoming infected. Be alert during the months of May through September when the virus peaks and mosquitoes are most numerous. For more information, go to the CDC website and sites about WNV.

Note: This article with a few edits recently appeared in *The Epitaph*, newsletter for the Old City Cemetery Committee.

Meet the Members

Mae Ferral

by Diana Morris

Open a copy of the recent best-seller *Hotel on the Corner of Bitter and Sweet*, opposite the title page is a black and white photo of an adorable seven-year old girl, dressed in a hat and coat with a name tag on a string draped over her coat, a gentle smile on her face as she looks at the camera, waiting with her family. The little girl is SPPC member Mae Ferral. Mae and her family were interned at Topaz, Utah from 1942 to 1946. Mae's photo is also on the cover of *The Children of Topaz*, a one year historical diary of third grade life written by Mae's class and



kept by her internment camp teacher, Miss Lillian "Anne" Yamauchi. Both books are insightful accounts of the lives of Japanese Americans during the war.

Before the war, Mae's father was a nurseryman in Hayward, raising and selling wholesale carnations, her mother grew orchids. During their time at Topaz, Mae's father became a glazier and the family increased to four sons and four daughters. Without family or acquaintances to tend the nursery during their absence, the land was sold.

After the war the family resettled in Berkley. Mae went on to attend UC Berkeley and taught kindergarten through third grade for 26 years in Sacramento. She says it doesn't seem so long ago that she taught school until she meets a parent that relates stories of his 36 year-old daughter, a former student.

Mae has been a longtime member SPPC, recalling early on when Bob Hamm and Daisy Mah were getting the club up and running. We've all enjoyed Mae's dedication to supplying snacks on our bus trips to the annual San Francisco Flower and Garden Show. And Mae enjoys all the trips the club takes but especially likes visiting different members' gardens

during board meetings. She says there is such a wide variety of gardens among the members, it is delightful to attend the meetings.

Upon arriving at Mae's house, one is in awe of the beautiful home, neighborhood, and the exquisitely tended gardens. Her Land Park home is filled with leaded and stained glass, antique furniture and collectibles, all a nod to her 36 years of dedication in creating a charming setting on College Avenue. The house has an unusual placement on the lot with the front door on the side of the house rather than directly

facing the street. This gives a visitor the chance to walk past the front garden and on into the spacious side yard, and a glance to the backyard.

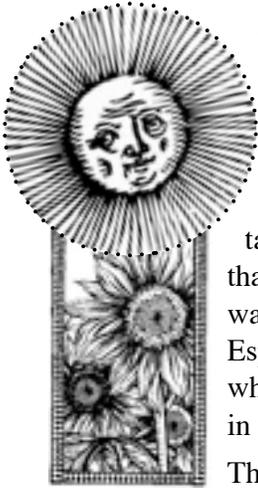
The gardens are filled with a mix of perennials and fruit trees. Husband Larry prefers the fruit trees that include oranges, apricots, mandarins and more, plus a recently planted olive tree. Mae is fond of the new pomegranate tree but her abiding affections can be seen in the perennials. Epimedium is the current favorite for Mae and she has them scattered throughout the garden. Her dogwood was in full bloom during the interview and was a gorgeous pink specimen with a lovely shape. The newest addition is a spa along with an interesting meandering patio that touches on all corners of the garden. Small ponds are scattered throughout with a wide variety of plants to enjoy.

Having traveled in Europe, Egypt and Israel, Mae and Larry found themselves in Turkey on 9/11 and had to spend an extended time there due of flight cancellations. Mae mentioned the people of Turkey were very kind and helpful during such a stressful time.

Her warm and open charm make it a pleasure to chat with Mae. She is an incredible living history lesson.

Late Spring Gardening

by Bob Hamm



May takes us from spring weather early in the month, to summer weather at the end of it. Growth is rapid and a large number of plants come into bloom.

With increasing temperatures, some words on watering seem appropriate. Remember that young, recently planted items take more frequent watering than older, established plants *and* that since they are not rooted into the surrounding soil, they need water at their base (rootball), not just depending on the sprinklers. Especially on larger sizes, I've seen a plant dry out and die even when sprinklers were running because it didn't get enough water in its rootball to keep it going.

Think of newly planted items (especially larger sizes) as if they were pots sunk into the ground and you'll have a better idea of

why they need more care in watering. They need water in the "pot" (rootball) area and sprinklers often don't do it.

Although many gardeners don't realize it, plants like dogwood, rhododendron and azalea will start to set buds for next spring in June and July, so May is the last month that I'd recommend any major pruning on them.

Garden Notes Newsletter

The *Garden Notes* newsletter, is available for free by emailing a request to vbpsac@gmail.com. Due to recent problems with Bob's email, those who have already been receiving the newsletter will need to sign up again.

May brings the planting of warm weather annuals and veggies and there is still time to seed annuals such as cosmos, marigolds, and zinnia for mid- to late summer color.

Gladiola bulbs can still be planted for bloom later in the summer and the same for the large flowered dahlias. Tithonia (Mexican Sunflower), sunflowers and morning glory are all warmth loving annuals that can be seeded in now and will grow fast for blooms from mid-summer on into fall.

While young, fast growing plants need regular feeding, as do pots; more mature established plants do not need as much. In fact, in mature gardens over feeding can cause too much growth!

Aphids are making their annual explosive appearance on roses and other plants. While you can spray for them, a strong stream of water from the hose to wash them off works almost as well and won't kill ladybugs that come to feed on the aphids. I only wash off large concentrations of aphids; the ladybugs usually appear and take care of the rest in short order. Note that ladybug larva, (the immature stage of ladybugs) resembles little black worms usually with a few red spots. These feed on aphids until they retreat into pupa to hatch out as the ladybugs you know.



Blooms from the Tombs

by Sharon Patrician

Hamilton Square

I look forward to this plant blooming each year. I've read it is invasive, but the writer lives in the Bay Area. I personally have never had this problem.

Scilla peruviana is an extremely showy bulb with an inflorescence of sky blue flowers with gold-tipped stamens (see photo on back cover). Apparently, this plant was misnamed by Linnaeus himself who thought the bulb came from Peru, when instead it is a Mediterranean native which came to him on a ship named "Peru." It has a long bloom period with many stems on each bulb. It goes dormant in the summer and leaves reappear first in late fall.

If you have the space, this is a nice plant for the front of your beds. Be warned, however, that all parts of *scilla* (all species) are poisonous. Keep young children and inquisitive dogs out of harm's way.



SPPC Newsletter
Cheryl McDonald
2743 San Luis Court
Sacramento, CA 95818

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Scilla peruviana blooming in Hamilton Square