



Sacramento Perennial Plant Club NEWSLETTER

Founded 1988

www.sacramentoperennialplantclub.com

Jan / Feb 2012

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Primula pubescens
'Exhibition Blue'
"Gardeb Auricula"
Photo: Annie's Annuals



JANUARY PROGRAM SPEAKER

Analisa Stewart

Tree Pruning

Shepard Garden & Arts Center

Thursday, January 26, 2012, 7:00 PM

Analisa Stewart is a consulting arborist working in the greater Sacramento area. In addition to being an ISA Certified Arborist with a Municipal Specialty (# WE 7860AM) Analisa is also a Certified Tree Risk Assessor (CTRA # 1010). Her interest in trees began almost 10 years ago when she worked at the Sacramento Tree Foundation coordinating volunteer tree plantings in schools, parks, parking lots and along city streets. She transitioned to the private sector to manage the plant health care department of a large full service tree care company. In her most recent adventure Analisa is the President of Arbor Entities, Inc., a consulting arboricultural firm. She uses her experience to benefit homeowners, school and park districts, architects and large land owners to identify and manage trees, tree problems and tree populations in the landscape. We will need several clean, sharp by-pass pruners to do same hands on cutting, if you have one please bring it with you.

FEBRUARY PROGRAM SPEAKER

John Gray

Gardens of Scotland

Shepard Garden and Arts Center

Thursday February 23, 2012, 7:00 PM

John Gray was born and raised in Sonora. He received a BS degree in Plant Science from UC Davis and began an award winning landscape construction/design business, JEG Enterprises, in Davis in 1971. He now resides in the Modesto Area designing, consulting, and doing job management. He started "Garden Tours of Scotland" in 1991. His 2 -3 week summer tours would visit public and private gardens in the Highlands and Eastern Scotland. He also has done spring tours of the western coast of Scotland. John's circle of friends includes many Scottish gardeners and designers, who opened private gardens not normally seen on tours. He will share his photos and his knowledge of plants and garden design. John is a life time member of UC Davis Arboretum, member of the Garden Writers of America, Royal Horticultural Society, Pacific Horticulture Foundation and program director of the Modesto Garden Club.

The next Perennial Plant club Board of Directors meetings will be held January 10th at Noelle Anderson home 916-731-4648. As always, board meetings are open to all members. These meetings are a great chance to see how the club is run and where you might like to help. We also get a chance to tour the wonderful gardens of our members before dinner. Friends, gardens, food, and club business. Can't beat that! Meetings begin at 5 PM and start with a potluck dinner – informative *and* delicious.

Perennial Plant Club

11th Annual Plant & Garden Vendor Sale Unusual Plants and Garden Treasures

Membership Dues for 2012

Plans are being made to host the 11th annual Vendors Sale on **Saturday, March 31, 2012**. Gary Doerr, President of Blooms of Bressingham will be our speaker. We will have specialty nurseries and businesses that sell garden related items participating in the sale, many of them from outside the Sacramento area, but we are also looking for new vendors. You may know of someone who makes garden furniture, garden art, has a nursery or any other garden related business, who would be interested in selling at our sale; contact Saul Wiseman 530-885-9248. We are collecting used gardening books and magazines to sell at the sale. We are also looking for volunteers to help Saul in the presale work, to work Friday night setting up and to work on Saturday.

In this newsletter is your renewal application for 2012. Please fill out your application, note any changes to address and email. Be sure to add any suggestions you have for the club at the bottom of the application and volunteer for some of the activities. We want to hear from you any ideas you have for speakers, tours, classes, and anything we could do to make the club better. It also helps us plan the year knowing what activities you feel have helped you learn more about plants and gardening and has made gardening more enjoyable. **Remember** to receive a newsletter and attend garden tours and classes you must pay your 2012 dues. You do not have to be a paid member to attend meetings, everyone is welcome.

Program and Tour For 2012

The 2012 Calendar has been included in the newsletter; keep it handy to look for upcoming events. If there are any changes or additions, I will announce them in future newsletters. We have an interesting year of speakers; from pruning, improving the soil, starting plants, designing gardens to each of us making a small water gardens. We have 5 Spring Garden Tours planned to member's gardens and to Troll Knoll and three other private gardens in the Grass Valley area. Peggy Weseloh, Barbara Lane-Piert, Elizabeth Jones and Janice Sutherland have worked on this year's calendar. We are still working on tours and workshops for this year. We are also going to start working on the 2013 calendar. If you have any suggestions for speakers, gardens (could be yours, a friends or out of town garden) or an interesting nursery or place we would like to visit, please call or email one of us. Working on the calendar as a group has been fun and we are always interested in adding people to this committee and other groups in the club.



Forcing Branches

Get a jump on spring and bring flowering shrubs indoors. Forcing blooms is easy with a few simple steps:

In late January to early March, look for shrubs with long branches and lots of swollen, plump buds. Cut branches in the afternoon when flowers have the most moisture.

Use sharp pruners and cut branches at a 45-degree angle and at least 12 inches long. To draw water to the blooms, smash the bottom 2 inches of the cut end using a hammer or mallet.

Place branches in room-temperature water and put in a cool spot away from sunlight. Change water often for longer bloom time. Keep branches moist by covering with a plastic bag or by misting daily.

Depending on the shrub (forsythia and pussy willows are quick to open), buds will start flowering in 1 to 4 weeks.



Once they start to bloom, move branches to a sunnier spot and enjoy! They'll last up to a week.

Best shrubs for forcing: Azalea, beauty bush, crab apple, flowering quince, forsythia, magnolia, pussy willow, redbud, rhododendron, serviceberry, spirea, witch hazel, and fruit trees (such as cherries, pears, and apples).

**This is the first in an ongoing column called
'Get to know our Members'**

**No Droopy Plants, An Interview with Madeline
Mullins
By Diana Morris**

When asked if she started gardening as a young child, Madeline Mullins' answer was an emphatic "No!" Madeline says growing up in western Ireland if she or her siblings said they were bored or had nothing to do, they would be sent to the garden to weed. Consequently, weeding is her least favorite chore in her garden.

However, Madeline did return to the garden as a young mother some 50 plus years ago when she and husband Jack bought a home in Sacramento. Between raising a family of four daughters and teaching K-8 for 29 years, she managed to design a backyard full of her favorite flowers including roses and phlox.

A busy volunteer in retirement, Madeline spends Tuesdays with Daisy Mah in the WPA rock garden. Mah was influential for Madeline. She read about Mah and asked her to... "take her on." Madeline went on to join the Sacramento Perennial Plant Club and credits the club with meeting the "most wonderful people." One of the numerous pillars of SPPC, she is our hospitality hostess providing refreshments at all our meetings. In addition, she ramrods the spring and fall plant sale for SPPC at Shepherd Garden Center. She also works with Sharon Patrician in the Old Cemetery volunteering to maintain a designated plot. In full sun, the plot presented a problem but Madeline said the marigolds flourished this past summer.

Although she taught her daughters to garden and all daughters do garden now, Madeline enjoys working in her daughters' gardens. Several live nearby in Sacramento and one recently relocated in San Francisco. She says gardening in the City is a whole new experience with the milder climate and choice of plants.

When pressed Madeline said it was difficult to choose one favorite plant but heucheras (coral bells) and euphorbias rank high on her list, as do poppies. She expressed her pleasure in the multi-color foliage of huecheras. One guideline for her garden, "Plants must behave; no droopy things in the garden." She top dresses with compost and mulch being careful not to disturb the soil. She said she cringed as she watched her neighbor till his ground and encouraged him not to use the rototiller. Better to spread the compost and allow the good microbes and worms to do their jobs.

Of all the garden chores, Madeline enjoys planting the most and adding new plants to her garden is an ongoing delight. She has been known to wander through nurseries in the pouring rain seeking out another discovery to add to her collection. She says she often leaves plants in the original containers and places them throughout her garden, moving them from one spot to another pursuing just the right location before actually planting the specimen in the ground.

Fine Gardening, Horticulture Magazine, and Garden Gate are some of her favorite publications. And she enjoys the catalogs from Blue Stone Nursery, White Farm and a SPPC favorite, Digging Dog. Going back to her roots, Madeline mentioned reading the English BBC Home and Garden magazine. When pressed about a favorite author or her current reading material, she said she had recently read "The Man Who Listened to Horses" and thoroughly enjoyed the book. She is an avid visitor to the library.

Fertilizer is given a light touch in Madeline's garden; however, she related a humorous tale about her San Francisco daughter "foraging." Her daughter shared a bounty of nettles she had foraged and Madeline is currently working on "nettle tea" much like compost tea. The concoction has been relegated to the far corner of the garage because of the strong odor. In addition, Madeline took a stab at some nettle soup but decided husband Jack could have her portion.

Thanks to Madeline for her continuing support of SPPC. With her warm, Irish charm and friendly demeanor, she is truly an outstanding treasure among gardeners.



Perennial Plant Club

Gardens Alive Purchases Weeks Roses in Bankruptcy Auction

Charlotte Owendyk

Further fallout from the Jackson & Perkins bankruptcy has slowly been rippling through the industry. Weeks, one of J&P's creditors, to the tune of millions, was not able to recoup in this difficult economy. As a result, they were forced to declare bankruptcy; so in a large sense, J&P pulled Weeks down with it.

In a bankruptcy auction held in Wilmington, Delaware, on May 16, IGP Acquisition, a newly formed company under common ownership and control with an affiliated group of companies that includes *Gardens Alive!* purchased the assets of International Garden Products, including its subsidiaries Weeks Wholesale Rose Grower and Iseli Nursery, Inc.

IGP Acquisition is owned by Niles Kinerk, who according to the website started *Gardens Alive!* in his kitchen and garage in the early 1980's.

"IGP Acquisition LLC" had been designated as the "stalking horse" bidder by the court and had agreed to open the bidding with a bid of \$26,670,000. At the auction, another bidder appeared, and *Gardens Alive!* had to increase its offer by \$600,000 over that provided in the initial agreement.

Gardens Alive! out of Lawrenceburg, Indiana, is a frequent bidder at bankruptcy auctions. In October, 2001, *Gardens Alive!* purchased the assets of Foster & Gallagher at a bankruptcy auction. These assets included Breck's Bulbs, Henry Fields, Gurney's Seed & Nursery, and Michigan Bulb Company.

Last year *Gardens Alive!* was an unsuccessful bidder for Jackson & Perkins, Wayside Gardens, and Park Seeds. Although *Gardens Alive!* offered more than the successful bidder for the combined companies, its bid was rejected because it would not agree to keep the combined companies in South Carolina.

According to information filed with the court, *Gardens Alive!* has been in business continuously since 1986, has gross annual sales in excess of \$150,000,000, and has a net worth in excess of \$15,000,000. *Gardens Alive!* and its affiliates currently employ approximately 900 people. In addition, *Gardens Alive!* has completed more than seven acquisitions in the past ten years, and all of those acquired businesses are currently operating."

New Acquisitions

Iseli Nursery, located in Boring, Ore., has been in business since 1975. Iseli is North America's premier wholesale

provider of unique conifers and Japanese maples. Iseli will operate as a standalone wholesale business as well as provide *Gardens Alive!* mail order brands with additional product offerings.

Weeks Roses, located in Wasco, Calif., is one of the country's leading wholesale rose growers since 1938. In addition to its rose lines, Weeks offers fruit and ornamental trees.

"We are truly excited about this opportunity to be associated with these well regarded organizations," said *Gardens Alive!* founder and owner Niles Kinerk.

According to the company, these purchases round out *Gardens Alive!* roster of leading U.S. mail-order gardening brands: Audubon Workshop, Breck's of Holland, *Gardens Alive!*, Gurney's Seed and Nursery Company, Henry Field's Seed & Nursery Company, Michigan Bulb Company, Spring Hill Nurseries and Thompson & Morgan.

Keith Zary, who hybridized about a dozen AARS winners for J & P including 'Gemini' and this year's winner 'Walking on Sunshine', is now with *Gardens Alive!* in Tipp City, Ohio. He heads their R&D department, working with a variety of ornamentals and fruit.

Garden's Alive! now has three prominent rose hybridizers in-house: Tom Carruth, Christian Bedard and Keith Zary. Quite a trifecta; will they all be working on roses? Three sets of eyes belonging to rose hybridizers would certainly be a bonus in new rose selections.

In July, Tom and Christian submitted five new roses for registration, so must feel things are moving forward. Weeks has been a great company and I know that I am not alone in wishing that there are lots of rose queens in their future.

Sources: Tipp News Daily, Garden's Alive Company Press Release,



Winter Composting Sacramento Master Gardeners

Compost piles continue to "cook" even in the cold weather. The bacteria decomposing the greens and browns gravitate to the center of the pile, and the heat is there. Continue to turn the pile and water as needed. This adds air, water, and more food for the decomposers. To learn more about composting go to the Sacramento County Master Gardeners Website ucanr.org/sites/sacmg/

Aloysia citrodora
Lemon Verbena
By John Gray



Part of the enjoyment in the garden is the wonderful feeling that you have when you venture out and take in the marvelous fragrances that are produced by various flora you come upon. I am a prime believer that the piquant essences found in any garden help enliven the

whole experience. *Aloysia citrodora* is one such plant.

My first experience with lemon verbena was during my many travels to Scotland when I came upon the Douglas Bader Handicapped Garden in Cupar (not far from St. Andrews). His lovely small sanctuary was planted with many

different and unusual plants that would appeal to anyone's sense of smell or touch. As I brushed by the *Aloysia*, I was overtaken by the wonderful essences produced by this very unassuming plant. It's not spectacular by any means, can grow up to 10' tall and 6-8' wide, has light green semi-glossy pointed leaves and light pink/white blooms in the late spring, which are rather passive in my opinion. But walking by it and running your hands through the leaves, transcends your assessment of this species to new heights. The lemon fragrance is strong but sweet and it leaves you with a wonderful feeling.

Aloysia is native to South America and was brought to Europe in the 18th century. Since it is herbal in nature it has been used for healing and can be used as an antioxidant, usually served in tea form. It is a relatively low maintenance plant, but I would recommend cutting it back once a year after march 15, so it stops being leggy and gangly, unless you like that effect. It likes moisture but can survive with minimum water, although I wouldn't exactly put it in the drought resistant category. It can survive to 30-32 degrees F, but would do better if semi protected. It is a great addition to any garden and with it you can enjoy the fragrance almost at any time of the year.



What's Blooming In January and February

Chaenomeles speciosa
'Jet Trails'

Masses of bright pure white flowers cover this compact spreading plant with shiny deep green leaves. Height 3-4 feet and 3-5 feet in width.



Photo:
Estabrook's

Ribes malvaceum
Chaparral currant

Medium size California native, pale pink winter flowers. Attracts hummingbirds; drought tolerant with scented leaves. Part shade, little pruning needed.



Photo:
UC Davis
Arboretum

Perennial Plant Club

SACRAMENTO PERENNIAL PLANT CLUB
WWW.SACRAMENTOPERENNIALPLANTCLUB.COM

14TH ANNUAL SPONSORED BUS TRIP TO:

SAN FRANCISCO FLOWER AND GARDEN SHOW

WEDNESDAY MARCH 21RD, 2012

BUS LEAVES 7:30 AM. — RETURN LEAVES SHOW AT 4 PM

COST \$50.00 PER PERSON

Thousands of flowers and plants, inspiring gardens, free seminars for all gardening levels, shopping from greenhouses to garden tools, bulbs to botanical arts, outdoor living, Bonsai, orchids, Ikebana displays and much more. New organizers and producers this year.

Bus will depart from the Shepard Garden & Arts Center, 3330 McKinley Blvd, Sacramento. CA
REAR ENTRANCE. The side we enter for meetings.

Snack will be served. We should arrive with plenty of time to browse before the first seminar starts. Show opens at 10 a.m. You can pack a lunch, or buy lunch there.

The \$50.00 fee includes the ticket to the show, a few snacks, and the bus ride that delivers you right to the entrance. THERE IS PLENTY OF ROOM FOR PURCHASES TO BE CARRIED HOME.

This bus tour is open to everyone, so tell your friends and invite them along! Friends and relaxed conversation on the bus, no driving or parking concerns, and **plenty of room to bring home garden goodies!!!**

FOR SHOW INFORMATION INCLUDING SEMINARS & EXHIBITORS VISIT THEIR WEB SITE

<http://www.sfgardenshow.com>

CUT ALONG LINE AND SEND WITH CHECK MADE OUT TO: PERENNIAL PLANT CLUB

MAIL TO: ELIZABETH JONES 1760 LA PLAYA WAY SACRAMENTO, CA 95864 PHONE 916-488-8465

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 21, 2012

SAN FRANCISCO FLOWER AND GARDEN SHOW

SAN MATEO CONVENTION CENTER

NAME _____ PHONE# _____

MAILING ADDRESS _____ EMAIL _____

NAME _____ PHONE# _____

MAILING ADDRESS _____ EMAIL _____

TOTAL ATTENDING _____ AMOUNT ENCLOSED _____

Sacramento Perennial Plant Club

Sacramento Perennial Plant Club Membership - 2012

Jeanne Christopherson, Membership Chair

ALL MEMBERS - PLEASE FILL OUT THE ADDRESS FORM COMPLETELY

Name(s) _____ Date _____

Phone Number (____) _____ - _____ E-mail Address _____

Mailing Address _____

City

State

Zip

You will be included in our yearly roster unless you notify us otherwise. Yes ___ No ___

Yearly Dues _____ \$20 Individual Membership
_____ \$25 Joint Membership

Cash _____ Check _____ Make checks out to PERENNIAL PLANT CLUB.

Send to: Jeanne Christopherson, 3231 Chenu Avenue, Sacramento, 95821-6113
Phone (916) 283-6999, E-mail: iamjc7@surewest.net

Dear PPC member,

Please consider involving yourself more this coming year to make sure interesting and fun tours, talks, and activities continue. Many of these tasks can be shared - the more the merrier and less time consuming for all. Please take the time to add any suggestions you have for your club.

Please indicate your interest in helping in one or two of the following ways:

____ Membership – Hospitality - Jeanne Christopherson, Noelle Anderson, Beverly Shelling _____

____ Garden and Arts Center Sales Spring ___ & Fall ___ - Madeleine Mullin _____

____ Interested in writing articles for the newsletter - Janice Sutherland _____

____ Interested in writing book reviews for the Newsletter-Janice Sutherland _____

____ Computer skills (specify) _____

____ Work with garden tour planning group _____

____ Work with bus trips _____

____ Work with speaker and program planning group _____

____ General meeting goodies (coordinate with our food chair, Madeleine Mullins) _____

____ Volunteer Hamilton Square Garden– Sharon Patrician – 455-8166 _____

____ Volunteer Land Park WPA Rock Garden – Daisy Mah – 446-1768 _____

____ Work with the vendor sale planning group -Saul Wiseman 530-885-9248 _____

____ Interested in learning to make garden projects _____

____ Interested in learning to propagate plants _____

____ Club activities I most enjoy: _____

Suggestions for speakers, tours, gardens to visit, etc. _____

Perennial Plant Club

President's Message Saul Wiseman

Three items;

Although a number of members have expressed interest, I have decided not to lead a New York tour this coming May.

Still no progress on improving our website. For me, it is disappointing. Perhaps next year.

Vendor Sale of Rare and Unusual Perennials, returns in 2012 after a one year hiatus. Interesting guest speaker, Sacramento resident. **Gary Doerr, president of Blooms of Bressingham. Topic "You May Find Or Breed A Future Perennial Plant Of The Year."**



Janice Sutherland
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