



THE MEDITERRANEAN GARDEN SOCIETY

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA BRANCH

An international forum devoted to furthering knowledge and appreciation of plants and gardens suited to the mediterranean climate regions of the world

Number 44
Spring 2015

UPCOMING EVENTS



photos by Mary Fisher

Alameda Garden Tour

Sunday, June 7, 10:30AM

We are going to step out in early June and visit the islands—well, just one island—taking in a collection of beautiful mediterranean-inspired gardens on the isle of Alameda. Designer Mary Fisher is sharing her own garden as well as that of one of her clients, and we have some other special gardens to visit, as well.

We'll pause in the middle of garden viewing for lunch at a pleasant local restaurant, and expect to finish up at around 3PM or so.

Sign up for this tour by May 15 by emailing Nancy Swearingen at nswearingen@hotmail.com. \$30/person, tour limited to 25 people.

— Cheryl Renshaw



BRANCH DATEBOOK

Other events of interest to our members:

- Apr. 8 **Juicy Succulents and Plant Exploration**
Greg Starr, Starr Nursery, Tucson, AZ
Western Horticulture Society
7:30PM
Los Altos
- Apr. 11 **Master Gardeners of Santa Clara County
Spring Garden Market**
9AM – 2PM
San Jose
- Apr. 18-19 **Going Native Garden Tour**
10AM – 4PM
Santa Clara & San Mateo Counties
- Apr. 24-25 **Gamble Garden Spring Tour & Plant Sale**
10AM – 4PM
Palo Alto
- May 2-3 **Bringing Back The Natives**
10am – 5PM
Alameda & Contra Costa Counties

Stay up-to-date with our upcoming events at:
<http://sites.google.com/site/mgsnorcal/upcoming-events/>

More Northern California garden events are listed on the [Pacific Horticulture](#) website.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2015

La Mortella, Italy

The main program of this year's AGM begins with a welcome reception the evening of Thursday, Oct. 22 and concludes the evening of Sunday, Oct. 25, and includes a tour of the archaeological museum at **Lacco Ameno**, a glass-bottomed boat tour of **Ischia Ponte** harbor and Marine Reserve Area, tour and concert at **La Mortella**.

The pre-tour program runs from October 16-21. It begins in Naples with a tour of the **Santa Chiara cloister garden**, includes trips to **Palazzo Reale Caserta** and the private garden of the Duchess Guevara di Bovino, Capri, Pompeii, and Amalfi. Post-tour, members can take a tour of the romantic gardens of Lazio—**Hadrian's Villa**, **Villa d'Este**, **La Landriana**, **Torreccchia** and **Ninfa**—from October 26-29.

Registration for all events will go live on the **MGS website** on May 21, on a strictly first come, first served basis. The tours fill up early, so prepare to register as soon as you can.

— Cheryl Renshaw



photo of *Bulbinella floribunda* by Cheryl Renshaw

HOLD THE DATE: SEPTEMBER 20, 2015

PALO ALTO PUBLIC GARDENS

We're looking forward to next fall, when we return to Palo Alto for a visit to the Master Gardeners' Palo Alto Demonstration Garden and the Elizabeth F. Gamble Garden Mediterranean Beds. Both gardens highlight mediterranean and waterwise gardening, teaching Palo Alto residents how to think beyond lawns and other inefficient landscape choices. We will have more information in our next newsletter this fall, but for now, please pencil us in for Sunday, September 20—you'll be glad you did!

— Cheryl Renshaw

PLANT PROFILE: *Eremophila*

Looking for some new drought tolerant plants? Have you considered the *Eremophila* genus? *Eremophilas* comprise 214 species, are native to Australia and grow in every state and territory. Their size varies from low growing shrubs to small trees. *Eremophilas* are in general very drought tolerant and cold hardy once established. There are no special soil or fertilizer cautions unlike some other Australian plants. They are excellent candidates for containers and hot sites in fast draining soil which may also be slightly alkaline. Plant care includes pruning for shape and to maintain an open habit for good air flow through its structure. Some varieties need afternoon shade and some tolerate full day sun. Available colors range from yellow, orange, red, blue and to lavender purples. Foliage varies from frosty gray-green to shiny dark green.



photo by Richard Tiede

We bought our first plant in 2010, a magenta *Eremophila maculata* 'Valentine', an evergreen shrub, from Gold Rush Nursery in Soquel, south of Santa Cruz. It is a beautiful, low growing shrub with magenta flowers in fall-winter-spring. It has small green leaves that flush red in cold weather.

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On another occasion we were given a cutting of *E. glabra* 'Kalgoorlie', a low grower with orange tinged yellow blossoms.

Since most emu bushes are upright to 2 to 4 feet, they are a good background plant against a wall or fence. The photos are of the five varieties we currently have. While in Southern California in 2011 we visited Australian Native Plant Nursery near Ojai owned by Jo O'Connell to see what varieties she carried. We picked up the *E. aurea* and *E. hygrophana* there. I did find some reports that deer are not attracted to *Eremophila* species.

photos by Richard Tiede

On our trip to the Australian MGS meeting in 2012, we visited Barossa Bushgarden near Adelaide. In this botanical garden, there grew 30 plus species in a dry garden setting. There were many varieties for sale grown in their greenhouse but we could only bring home photos.



Here are some websites to explore, and you can order through your favorite nursery.

Mountain States Wholesale Nursery (Arizona)

Australian Native Plant Nursery

Australian Information website

— Richard Tiede

Williamsburg Orange Cake

Ingredients:

½ cup of butter
1 cup sugar
2 eggs
Zest of one orange, minced
1 cup raisins (chopped) (raisins de Corinthe en France)
½ cup walnuts
1 teaspoon vanilla
1½ cup flour
1 teaspoon baking soda
½ teaspoon salt
1 cup buttermilk

Preheat oven to 350°F. Cream butter with sugar. Add eggs and mix until batter does not look curdled, then add vanilla. Add in orange peel, raisins and nuts.

Sift flour with baking soda and salt, and add to batter, alternating with buttermilk in 3 batches.

Grease and flour a 9" square or round pan. Pour batter into prepared pan, then bake until an inserted toothpick comes out clean (about 30 minutes). Cool cake before frosting with Williamsburg Butter Frosting.

Williamsburg Butter Frosting

Ingredients:

¼ cup butter, softened
6 teaspoons orange liqueur or sherry
1 tablespoon orange zest
2 ¼ cups confectioner's sugar

In a large bowl, blend butter with powdered sugar. Stir in liqueur and zest. Beat until light and fluffy. Makes 1 ½ cups.

Online MGS Forums

The international MGS website at <http://mediterraneangardensociety.org/> has two online forums. The Mediterranean Gardening and Plants forum is open to anyone interested. The MGS Members Forum is only open to MGS members, and is a place for members to discuss any topic of MGS interest, apart from gardening.

So, if you want to talk about your garden or your favorite mediterranean climate plant, go to the first forum at:

<http://www.mgsforum.org/smf/index.php>

If you are interested in talking about issues related to the society itself with your fellow MGS members, sign in to the Members Forum at:

<http://www.mgsmembersforum.org/smf/>

— Cheryl Renshaw

Mediterranean Garden Workdays

The Mediterranean Garden at Lakeside Park in Oakland needs you! We have a workday on the first Saturday of the month from 9:00 AM to noon. The City charges for parking, but the parking fee will be waived if you tell the attendant you're there to work at the Mediterranean Garden. Please call [Nancy Swearengen \(510.547.2548\)](tel:510.547.2548) for more information.

— Nancy Swearengen

Upcoming workdays:

Apr. 4 Jul. 11*
May 2 Aug. 1
Jun. 6 Sep. 12*

*July's and September's workdays are delayed one week due to national holidays.



photo by Seán O'Hara

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Payment of dues for the Mediterranean Garden Society includes you in this Branch if you specify branch inclusion directly on the membership form. You can join at any of our events or send your application separately. For a membership form, visit the MGS web site:

www.MediterraneanGardenSociety.org

This newsletter is published in the FALL, WINTER, & SPRING (dormant in SUMMER!) to announce the events and news of the Northern California Branch of the MGS.



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