



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 48
Autumn 2016

UPCOMING EVENTS

Presidio Garden Visit

Sunday, October 23
10:30 AM to 3:00 PM
San Francisco Presidio

The Presidio is 5% of the city of San Francisco and contains forest, beach, fort, rare plants, wild animals, fancy restaurants, offices and studios, public art, trails and a hotel within its boundaries.



photo by the National Park Service

With the expert guidance of Jeff Wright, Staff Plant Geek, we will start our visit at the **Letterman Digital Arts Center** on the George Lucas campus on the east side of the park. This landscape was designed by Larry Halprin, who would have been 100 years old this year. The garden features open spaces with spectacular hillside views of trees, boulders, and water features. We may get a glimpse of Yoda too.

After this, we'll have lunch in the park. Lunch location is to be determined based on tour response. After lunch we will walk or drive

to the **Officer's Club** to see Andy Goldsworthy's installation, *Earth Wall*, and recent plantings. There will be time to learn about the Presidio at the **Heritage Gallery**.

From here we will walk through the historic **Main Post** and stop at **The Presidio Trust** building to take a self-guided tour of the *Tunnel Top* project, designed by James Corner Field Operations. This firm was instrumental in the High Line design in New York City. The *Tunnel Top* project will be completed in 2017, and will be the largest public garden installation of our time. If you are inclined, the Disney Museum is next door.

Please RSVP as soon as you can so I can get a count for a lunch reservation. Email braceytd@gmail.com with the number in your party. The upper limit is 24 people so don't delay. Lunch will be a max of \$30 per person, depending on location. Parking is limited but available in **Pay-and-Display parking spaces**. The Presidio itself is free.

— Bracey Tiede

BRANCH DATEBOOK

Other events of interest to our members:

- Sept. 14 **The Spell of the Sensuous**
Chris Woods
Western Horticulture Society
Los Altos
7:00 PM
- Sept. 25 **UC Botanical Garden Plant Sale**
UC Berkeley
Members: 9:00 to 10:00 AM
10:00 AM to 3:00 PM
- Oct. 1-2 **Merritt College Plant Sale**
Oakland
9:00 AM to 3:00 PM (Sat)
12:00 noon to 3 PM (Sun)
- Oct. 8 **The Bold Dry Garden** book launch
Mrs. Dalloway's Bookstore
Berkeley
4:00 PM
- Nov. 9 **A Succulent for Every California Garden** with Brian Kemble
Western Horticulture Society
Los Altos
7:00 PM

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.

Pacific Horticulture Society Summit 2016

October 14-16

Sonoma County—where nature and design come together in public and private gardens both intimate and immense, where one-of-a-kind nurseries and spectacular wineries reside—is the site of an upcoming Pacific Horticulture weekend symposium. The weekend will feature a half dozen of the most forward-thinking horticulturists in the West and beyond who will share their ideas about creating resilient landscapes that support the surrounding environment while expressing a distinctive aesthetic. Details can be found at <http://www.pacifichorticulture.org/events/summit-2016>. Since it will be fall in wine country, reserve your hotel ASAP.

— Bracey Tiede

MORE EVENTS

California Garden and Landscape History Society Annual Conference

This event will be held in Chico, Jewel of the North Valley from September 23-25, 2016. The focus of this conference is the beautiful town of Chico, the Bidwells who contributed to that beauty and the Maidu, the local native people. Visits include Sierra Brewing Company, Chico State University Arboretum, Bidwell Mansion and Park, Chico Canyon Ranch, and the 112 year old U.S. Forest Service's Genetic Resource and Conversation Center (Tree Farm). Speakers will cover historical, cultural, botanical and geological topics. Details at <http://cglhs.org/chico-jewel-north-valley-conference>.

Salvia Summit 3

The third meeting of Salvia experts from around the world will be held on October 7-9, 2016 in Berkeley. Events include welcome reception, talks by more than a dozen experts, tours of UC Berkeley, Regional Parks and San Francisco Botanic Gardens, dinner in Julia Morgan Hall at UCB, and more. Details can be found at http://www.seed-hunt.com/salvia_summit.html.

— Bracey Tiede



Epilobium 'Alba'

PLANT PROFILE:

Epilobium *California Fuchsia*

Is it *Zauschneria* or *Epilobium*? Either way, California Fuchsias are a California native genus that can add bright red, orange, pink and white to your yardscape, in the heat of summer and fall for 3 months or more. A little water can assure long bloom. The amazing selection of sizes, shape, leaf color and texture, and 1 to 2 inch long flowers make it a winner. Oh, and the fine, multi-stemmed branches can be up to 4 ft high, or as low as 6–16 inches depending on species or selection. A Pacific Horticulture article by Bart O'Brien from 2007 about [Rancho Santa Ana Botanical Garden's trials of *Epilobium*](#) is available online at their website.

Epilobium canum



Epilobium canum ssp. *latifolium* 'Everett's Choice.' All photos by Richard Tiede.

Epilobium septentrionale 'Wayne's Silver' is a low growing mound to 6 inches tall to 2-3 ft. wide, with bright silvery leaves and scarlet red flowers. *E. canum* ssp. *latifolium* 'Everett's Choice' is also low and spreading, with fuzzy, gray green foliage and bright warm red flowers. *Epilobium* 'Brilliant Smith' is a great selection that's low, but more upright, with wide green leaves and large red flowers. The best known tall cultivar is probably 'Catalina,' which can grow tall enough to be used as a seasonal hedge.

Epilobium prefers loose, fast draining soil where its stolons can spread just under the surface. Hardy to a low 10°F/-12°C, most cultivars die back in winter, which is a good time to cut it back to the ground. You can find it at most nurseries that sells California natives.

— Richard Tiede

Book Launch Forum: *Planting Design for Dry Gardens* by Olivier Filippi

Mrs. Dalloway's Bookstore in Berkeley hosted a book launch event with our branch on July 16 for Olivier Filippi's new book, *Planting Design for Dry Gardens*. Unfortunately, the author could not fly in from France for the event, so we did our best with a panel discussion hosted by MGS branch head Bracey Tiede with nurseryman Jeff Rosendale of *Sierra Azul Nursery* and Olivier's friend (and fellow mediterranean plant fanatic), *Sean O'Hara*. Following the lively discussion, Jeff gave away plants to the first 30 attendees.

Jeff has written a review of the book for *Pacific Horticulture*, which will be published in their fall issue. If you are not a member of *Pacific Horticulture* yet, you can [join at their website](#) (highly recommended!).

In this book, Olivier covers ground covers that are better adapted to a mediterranean climate than the (somewhat) traditional English lawn. He touches on the history of lawns in the context of garden history, talks about how ground covers have evolved in the wild and what competition strategies they use, then moves into his main topic: ten ways of using ground covers in a mediterranean climate garden.



photo by Cheryl Renshaw

The ten ideas Olivier recommends for different purposes, ranging from a lawn-like surface of warm season grasses for those who really want a lawn, to a mixed carpet of matting ground covers, to a flowering steppe, to a summer dormant mediterranean meadow for areas that can be left wild.

Olivier continues with directions on how to make and maintain a ground cover garden: soil preparation, planting density, irrigation by zones, and using good garden practices to limit disease and attract beneficial insects.

The final section of the book is an encyclopedia of ground cover plants. Each entry lists a plant's origin, size, environment, hardiness, and drought resistance, along with a description. The plants are not all commonly found in California, but many are familiar to gardeners in our area. The book as a whole inspires me to look at these plants in a new way (or ten).

— Cheryl Renshaw

Lake Merritt Mediterranean Garden

The Mediterranean Garden at Lake Merritt in Oakland, in the collection of specialty gardens that surround the Oakland-East Bay Garden Center, is a little gem. It is centered around a classical white marble well-head (fountain) that was a gift to the City of Oakland from philanthropist and bird-lover Nettie Stone Easterbrook 100 years ago. Its beds are arranged in a quartered circle design, which originated in the ancient Persian paradise gardens and spread to gardens throughout the Mediterranean. Each bed is planted according to a particular color scheme which is realized in the flower and leaf colors of its summer-dry plants. It's a great place to spend an hour taking the sun, reading, or chatting with a friend. It's also a fine place to visit once a month, on the first Saturday—to garden!

There is a small, dedicated group of volunteers that helps maintain this charming space, but there's always room for more! Everyone, espe-



photo by Nancy Swarengen

cially MGS members, is invited to come tease weeds and snip unruly shrubbery, gossip with fellow Mediterranean plant nuts, and cement our presence in this magical urban place.

For information, please contact Nancy Swarengen at nswarengen@hotmail.com or 510-547-2548.

— Nancy Swarengen

Upcoming workdays:

*Sept. 10	Dec. 3
Oct. 1	Jan. 7
Nov. 5	Feb. 4

*September's workday is delayed due to Labor Day.

SLOW ROASTED TOMATOES

A Santa Clara County Master Gardener Favorite Recipe

This delicious sauce be used as a spread, pasta sauce, bruschetta topping, sauce for baking fish, meats, frittatas. Some of the cooking liquid may be drawn off to be used as a delicious salad dressing.

Set the oven temperature to 350°F (adjust for a convection oven as needed).

15 pounds ripe tomatoes, any variety(s)
2 pounds onions, sliced thick or in wedges
1 pound of bell pepper strips, fresh or frozen
½ cup olive oil
¼–½ cup balsamic vinegar
½ cup sugar (optional)
3 tablespoons sea salt or to taste
Fresh or dried herbs: rosemary, thyme, cilantro, oregano, and/or basil
2-3 whole bulbs (not cloves) of roasted and pureed or raw minced garlic

Wash and cut tomatoes in wedges—no peeling is necessary as the long roasting softens skins. Place everything except herbs in a turkey roasting pan. The tomatoes will slowly create large amount of juice. The liquid gradually evaporates until sauce thickens. Turn pan and stir every half hour or so to prevent burning the top. Cooking time will vary from 3 to 5 hours, depending on tomato varieties and quantity. Do not undercook. Sauce is done when the sauce has thickened to your preference. Add the herbs during the last hour of cooking.

Notes:

Try different peppers and herbs. Substitute more peppers for onions or summer squash for peppers. Anything goes.

Ripe tomatoes can be cut into pieces and frozen until you collect enough for a roast. Tomato varieties may be mixed colors, or separate colors. Yellow varieties make an especially pretty sauce.

Freeze in single use freezer bags. Process for canning, but follow tomato canning precautions, as some tomatoes are low acid.

— Bracey Tiede

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2016

Athens & Corfu, Greece

As announced earlier, the Mediterranean Garden Society (MGS) 22nd Annual General Meeting (AGM) will be held from 20 to 23 October in Athens, Greece with the General Assembly being held on Sunday 23 October. Following the AGM, a tour to the Corfu Island has also been organized from 24 October through 26 October. Details are available at www.mediterraneangardensociety.org.

The Northern California Branch will be represented by Jean-Pierre Bouchez who is participating in both the AGM and the Corfu visits.

— Jean-Pierre Bouchez

BRANCH OFFICERS

CHAIR	ADVISORY BOARD
Bracey Tiede	Betsy Clebsch
	Tricia Christopher
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE	Anthony Garza
Jean-Pierre Bouchez	Bill Grant
Cheryl Renshaw	Katherine Greenberg
Nancy Swearengen	Chris Jacobson
Judy Thomas	Seán O'Hara
Bracey Tiede	Warren Roberts
Richard Tiede	Bernard Trainor
	Richard Turner

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.



THE MEDITERRANEAN GARDEN SOCIETY

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA BRANCH

MGS_NC@YAHOO.COM

WWW.MEDITERRANEANGARDENSOCIETY.ORG