

## January 2017 Plant Notes

Ted Kipping who gardens in SF in the fog (cloud forest conditions) brought in:

Abutilons – Brought in 3 unnamed hybrids however their ‘mom’ is a hoop type that is 15’ tall.

Aeonium - Ted brought in a flower spike. It takes several years to flower. Bees love the flowerspikes. The plant is 20-22" in diameter.

Blechnum occidentale (Hammock Fern) – This fern is just now showing off its new bright pink/crimson fronds, which usually start emerging in the spring. The leathery fronds are 3" wide and about 18" long and you might want to remove the older less colorful ones at the base. Every year it will increase in size by 3-6 inches. Like most woodland plants it requires good drainage with regular irrigation and is hardy to 20°.

Cuphea oreophila (Bat-Faced Cuphea) – This mountain lover (oreo = mountain and philo=lover) shrub grows in sun to part shade (zones 9-10) in rich soil. It grows to be 6’ tall x 4’ wide, however mine is 7’ tall. It has 2-3" vibrant red tubular blossoms that have 2 bat ears on top. Hummingbirds love it.

Cuphea unknown species – This smaller one only grows to 1.5-2’ ft. tall and has orange tubular blossoms with a yellow throat.

Dierama pulcherrimum (Fairy Wand Flower, Angel’s Fishing Rod) –

This purple selection comes from South Africa and grows in the sun (zones 7-10). It grows to be 5’ tall and wide. It has elegant purple pendulous bell shaped flowers that look like they’re suspended on arching fishing rods.

Lepechinia hastata

(Mexican Pitcher Sage, Baja Pitcher Sage) – This evergreen shrub from Mexico (Baja California) belongs to the mint family. It grows in sun to part shade and gets to be 6’ tall and wide. It has large aromatic arrow shaped gray green leaves. It has beautiful magenta sage flowers that appear on 1-foot spikes. The hummingbirds love it.

Salvia ‘Indigo Spires’ (‘Indigo Spires’ Sage) – This fast growing Salvia hybrid perennial grows in sun to part shade (zones 8-11) and gets to be 6’ tall by 3’ wide; although it has only grown to be 3.5-4.5’ tall in SF for Ted. The green opposite ovate leaves have a serrated margin. It has 12-15" long spike of dark purple tubular flowers. It blooms for a very long time.

Tillandsia somnians (Bromeliad) –

This is a climbing Bromeliad from the Cloud Forest. This tank forming type (holds its own water) has beautiful 8-12" soft green leaves that become maroon or red; the closer you get to the center. The spike gets 2-4’ long and makes pups/offsets. It is a cousin of Spanish moss.

Liz Calhoon from Los Altos brought:

Abutilon ‘Victor Reiter’ – This medium sized evergreen shrub grows in sun to part shade (zones 7-10) and needs well-drained soil. It grows to be 8’ tall x 5-6’ wide. The alternating leaves are a deep green and maple like. The tangerine orange hibiscus-like

flowers have a lighter center and yellow-green calyces, are 2.5-3" across and have 5 petals. It grows effortlessly, is hardy to 25°. Bees, birds and hummingbirds love the flowers.

Abutilon (Flowering Maple, Chinese Bell Flower, Chinese Lantern) - This large evergreen shrub started off as a cutting from Ted Kipping. It grows in part shade and gets to be 15' tall x 10' wide. It has reddish to coral flowers year round.

Judy Wong from Menlo Park brought:

Camellia sasanqua 'Yuletide' (Yuletide Camellia) - This broad-leaved evergreen shrub grows in sun to part shade (zones 7-10) and needs moist, acidic and well draining soil. It grows to 8' tall and almost as wide, although it can spread to be 10' wide. The shiny dark green alternating leaves are 2" long with serrated margins. The single vibrant red 2-3" flowers have bright yellow stamens and begin blooming in late autumn and are still blooming now.

Lavatera maritima 'Bicolor' (Tree Mallow) – This fast growing evergreen shrub is medium sized and grows in sun to part shade. It grows to be 8' tall and wide. It has grey green palmate lobed leaves. The flowers have a magenta or dark pink center surrounded by a paler pink or even white area. Mine still is blooming even after the rains we've had. Because of its fast growth it is short lived and may only last 5 years. It is hardy to 20° and attracts birds and butterflies.

Loropetalum chinense 'Razzleberry' (Chinese Fringe Flower) – This medium sized evergreen shrub grows sun to part shade and needs well-drained soil. It grows to be 4' tall and wide. The green alternating ovate shaped leaves are 2" long with serrated edges and turn to a bronze color in the fall. The deep pink to magenta fringe-like flowers bloom during the spring, summer and fall, although Judy's is still flowering.

Narcissus papyraceus (Paperwhite Narcissus) – These bulbs (monocots) have fragrant white flowers on 12-18' stalks, which start blooming in the spring but are easily forced. The small flowers have 6 petal-like tepals and have a trumpet-shaped corona in the center. The foliage is blue-gray and they grow in sun to part shade.

Ribes sanguineum 'White Icicle' - This medium sized flowering currant shrub grows in sun to part shade. It grows to 8' tall x 6' wide. The leaves have 5 rounded nodes with shallow sinuses between them and serrated margins. Hanging racemes of white flowers appear in the spring followed by blue-black berries, although mine still has some flowers. Considered a native, so many birds, pollinators and hummingbirds are attracted to it.

Verbena lilacina 'de la Mina' (Purple Cedros Island Verbena) – This small evergreen grows in sun and part sun (zones 7-10). It forms a tidy mound that gets to be 2' tall x 4' wide and grows in most soils but it must drain well. Fern-like dissected leaves are a light green color. It has fragrant dark purple star-shaped flowers that attract butterflies and blooms almost year round. This Mediterranean plant can go a long time without being watered. It is hardy to 20°.

Lyn Dearborn from Portola Valley brought: Salvia – This perennial gets to be 15' tall by 10' wide. It likes well-drained soil and part sun. It is hardy to 40°.

Nancy Schramm from Gilroy brought:

*Camellia japonica* 'Unryu' (Contorted Camellia) – This medium sized evergreen shrub grows in part sun to shade (zones 7a-9b) and needs moist, acidic and well draining soil. It grows to 6' tall and almost as wide, although it can grow to be 10' tall. The leathery, glossy dark green alternating leaves are 3-4" long with serrated margins. The pink to red flowers start blooming in October and are still flowering now. 'Unryu' means "dragons in the clouds" a reference to the twisted stems that appear to be a dragon reaching for the sky. Nancy loves twisted things.

*Ranunculus cortusifolius* (Canary Buttercup) – This herbaceous perennial grows in sun or shade and can get to be 5' tall. It will grow in almost any soil type. The 8-12" long bright green palmate leaves have scalloped margins. The bright glossy yellow flowers are 2" long and have a green center. It seeds all over, so it plant seeds right away or let it self-sow. Completely dies back (goes dormant) in the summertime so it does not need summer water but tolerates it just fine. It is hardy to 15°.

Katie Wong from San Jose brought:

*Eugenia uniflora* (Pitanga, Surinam Cherry, Brazilian Cherry, Cayenne Cherry or Cerisier Carré) – This wonderful, attractive, evergreen bush or tree grows in full sun or part sun (zones 9b-11) and will grow in all types of soil. It will only get to be 10' tall if grown in a container. However, it can get to be 25' tall in the wild. It is easy to care for. It has white flowers in the spring. It takes 7 years to get the small 1" round pumpkin-like shiny red to black (many different colors) fruit. These delicious berries are out of this world. It's 2" long leaves are fragrant. They are opposite, ovate shaped with entire margins. The top leaves turn red in the winter. You can make jam and jelly from them. The leaves can be spread on the floor and when crushed by being walked on release a compound that repels flies. It is hardy to 22°. It has some medicinal uses but please note that the seeds should not be fed to dogs since they might get diarrhea. ~Ana Muir