

March 2017 Plant Notes

Roberta Barnes brought in:

Teucrium scorodonia 'Crispum Marginatum' (Curly wood sage) –

This bulletproof evergreen groundcover grows everywhere, sun or shade (zones 7-9) in well-drained soil. The spreading mound gets to be 12-18" tall and 2' wide. The 2" oblong opposite light green leaves are soft and have ruffled edges that are flecked with white on the rim. Spikes of cream flowers begin flowering in the summer. Roberta bought her 1st one at Foothill College 20 years ago. Drought tolerant once established.

Heuchera 'Opal'

(Opal coral bells or alumroot) – This easy and tough hybrid was given to Roberta by Elizabeth Garbett. It was created in 1953 at Rancho Santa Ana Gardens and is a cross of *H. sanguinea* and *H. maxima*. It grows in sun or shade (zones 4-9) in clay rich soil and thrives under oak trees. A perennial, it gets to be 2' tall and wide. It has emerald green leaves and its pink buds open to white flowers on 2' stems starting in the spring. It is hardy to 15°. *Heuchera* 'Opal' photo: April 2017

Katie Wong from San Jose brought:

Boronia megastigma 'Hot Chocolate' (Brown boronia) – This evergreen perennial grows in full to part sun (zones 8-9) in well-drained and moist soil. It gets to be 2-3' tall and wide and is native to Australia. The small heath-like leaves/needles are a light green color. The small bell-shaped burgundy flowers (yellow on the inside) flower in the winter and spring and have a wonderful fragrance. This is a short-lived plant for Judy almost dying every year, but she loves the smell and just replaces it. I have also lost this cultivar because the soil really needs to be kept moist. However, I also love the smell and I can walk into a nursery and smell its fragrance 20 feet away. I'm growing 'Jack Maguire's Red' and this is my 2nd year so I'm keeping my fingers crossed. It is hardy to 15-20°.

Barbara Worl from Palo Alto brought:

Echium candicans (Pride of Madeira) – She got this fast growing evergreen shrub from Western Hills Nursery in Occidental. It grows in full sun (zones 9-11) and is drought tolerant. It gets to be 6' tall and wide. Upright stems hold whorls of gray-green leaves; which may cause skin irritation. Tall flower spikes with hundreds of blue flowers start blooming in the spring. Her plant is putting out little buds now and should be blooming in April. It is hardy to 25°.

Pandorea pandorana 'Golden Showers' (Yellow wonga-wonga vine) – This is a vigorous evergreen vine with dark green leaves that are bronze tinged as they emerge. The

tubular yellow flowers with reddish brown markings hang in pendulous clusters throughout the spring. It grows well with average garden water in full sun or light shade. It is hardy to 20-25°.

Bracy Tiede brought this in for Dick Turner who gardens in SF:

Canarina canariensis (Canary Island bellflower) - This summer dormant scrambling perennial grows in full sun to part shade (zones 9b-11) in well-drained soil. It gets to be 6-10' tall and wider. The opposite triangular leaves with dentate margins resemble an arrowhead. It starts growing from 2-3" tubers and new shoots start appearing in September making their way through shrubs. Pale orange bell shaped 3" flowers with a wonderful fragrance start appearing in October. It took many years for hummers to discover the nectar in them at Dick Turners' garden. Dick bought them at the SF Flower and Garden Show 18 years ago. Prune in June when it goes dormant and possibly plant with winter dormant shrubs. It is hardy to 28°

Richard Tiede from San Jose brought:

Salvia leucocephala (White headed sage) - This stunning perennial comes from mountainous cloud forest in Ecuador. It grows in full sun (zones 9-11) with rich, well-drained soil and plenty of water. It gets to be 6' tall. The maroon-red flowers against the silvery grey, downy leaves make for a stunning contrast. Richard got it from Flowers by the Sea (a mail order nursery) more than 1 year ago. It puts out thin branches and might fall down. Richard cuts off the low performing flower heads. He has about 1 dozen flower spikes of maroon-red flowers that have been blooming since December and will continue thru March.

Judy Wong from Menlo Park brought:

Albuca spiralis (Corkscrew albuca) – This fast growing South African bulb likes full sun (zones 8-11) and well-drained soil. It gets to be 8" tall and wide. The narrow green leaves with glandular hairs; usually have a spiral form resembling a corkscrew. However, this year the leaves didn't form coils and Judy thinks it might be due to too much rain. The vanilla scented green flowers have pale yellow/cream margins with green stripes and start blooming in the spring. It is summer dormant.

Sparaxis tricolor (Wandflower, Harlequin flower) – Judy got this bulb from Roberta Barnes at a WHS meeting. It grows better in full sun but will also grow in part shade (zones 9-11), in well-drained soil. The monocot leaves grow to 12-18" tall. The gorgeous looking tri-colored flowers have a bright yellow center and begin flowering in the spring. It makes for a good cut flower.

Sparaxis grandiflora ssp. *grandiflora*– Judy bought seeds for this rare bulb from Silverhill Seeds in 2010. It grows in full sun (zones 9-11) in well-drained soil. The light

green fan-shaped leaves get to be only 8" tall. Large reddish-purple flowers with 6 tepals start blooming in the spring. It took five years for it to bloom. It is happy this year as it's blooming. It is hardy to 30°.

Nancy Schramm from Gilroy brought:

Ginkgo biloba seedlings - These or Trident maple seedlings can be used for pre-bonsai. Both of these plant's trunks/stems can be intertwined and as they expand they will fuse together. In bonsai you want fat trunks to increase the appearance of age.

Leslie Dean from Mountain View brought:

Roldana petasitis (Velvet groundsel, Cineraria petasitis, Butter bur-leaved cineraria) – This large sprawling evergreen shrub grows in full sun (zones 9-11) however it is doing well for Leslie who has it growing in filtered shade (it's great for her shady front yard) and it still has a few flowers on it. It gets to be 8-10' tall and wide; however Leslie cuts it back every winter and it is only 4' x 4' in her dry garden. It has alternating large oval bright green leaves with shallow lobes, and the leaves feel like velvet. Originally from Mexico it belongs to the Asteraceae (Sunflower) family and has bright yellow daisy flowers starting in the late winter thru early spring. It likes medium water and is hardy to 20-25°.

~Ana Muir