

## ***FEBRUARY 2019 MEETING***

**Wednesday, February 13, 7:30 pm** **Los Altos Youth Center**, 1 North San Antonio Rd. Los Altos, CA 94022 *Meeting room officially opens to members and the public at 7 pm but if you can arrive by 6:30 pm to help with set-up, your assistance would be greatly appreciated.*

*Meetings are free for members, non-members \$10. See page 6 of this newsletter for information about joining WHS.*

**Speaker:** Aaron Dillon, Four Winds Citrus Growers, Watsonville  
**Citrus Varieties and How to Care for Them.**

**February 13, 2019**

In 1946, Floyd Dillon, concluded that California home gardens needed a universal tree that was both ornamental and useful. Nothing could say “California” better than a citrus tree. He worked with the leading citrus researchers of the time to develop a containerized dwarf citrus tree that he knew would make the perfect addition to every California patio. With deep green shiny leaves, heavenly scented flowers, and delicious fruit, what better tree could any transplant from the snowy Midwest ask for in their new California home? With that vision, he founded Four Winds Growers. After many years of hard work and a few big moves around the state, his business took off.

Floyd’s great grandson, Aaron Dillon, will be here to give you all the information you need to grow your own citrus trees in any setting. Topics will include information about: planting in containers or in the ground, pruning, fertilizing and variety selection including new varieties. He will also share tips for pest control and organic tree care.

You will get the latest update on the Huanglongbing (HLB) virus that is impacting citrus worldwide and hear tips on how to protect your trees.

Aaron Dillon is the great grandson of Four Winds Growers founder Floyd Dillon. He, along with his sister Lexa Dillon, have taken the reins from their father Don Dillon Jr. and their aunt Mary Helen Seeger, who ran the nursery for the last 35 years. He is proud to carry on his family’s tradition of providing their customers with high quality citrus trees for use in any setting.

Since returning to work at the nursery full time in 2002, Aaron has expanded Four Winds Growers offerings to include a wider range of edible fruit trees and bushes. In 2010, Four Winds took over a former rose nursery outside of Watsonville, where Aaron has overseen the development of 6 acres of insect resistant citrus production facilities. Four Winds produces over 300,000 citrus trees annually on 14 acres in the Monterey Bay Area.

Aaron attended Cal Poly San Luis Obispo where he studied environmental horticulture from 1994-1997. He then moved on to complete a BA in U.S. History from San Francisco State University in 2000, and an MA in Geography, with a concentration on Environmental Planning and Resource Management in 2013. His thesis focused on the evolution of the nursery business in the Bay Area during the Post-War Era. Aaron is passionate about teaching people to create productive and sustainable edible landscapes in any home garden, big or small.



*Join us for dinner with Aaron Dillon on  
February 13 ~ Chef Chu’s Restaurant*

Enjoy a wonderful meal and intimate conversation with our speaker.

Contact Katie Wong to RSVP: [alivensilk@aol.com](mailto:alivensilk@aol.com), 408-251-2742

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I am pleased to be stepping into this new role in the Western Horticultural Society and hopeful that you the membership will help me to keep our organization vibrant and thriving. Carrie has been very hardworking and conscientious and leaves big shoes to fill.

As I said at the last meeting, one of the first priorities on my plate is getting plants for our booth at the San Francisco Flower and Garden Show which is taking place at the Cow Palace March 20-24 this year. With our Hot Plant Picks we offer growers an opportunity to showcase new introductions or old favorites that the public may have forgotten about. I am looking for help in the booth during the show and for soliciting plants, arranging for transportation or pick-up from the nurseries and setting up our booth on March 19<sup>th</sup> and taking it down on the evening of March 24<sup>th</sup>. Right now I will offer first choice of 2 hour shifts in our booth (which includes a wrist band allowing you free entry to the show) to anyone who helps with soliciting plants or with set-up. Please e-mail me for a list of nurseries whom we have gotten plants from in the past and currently have already agreed to donate and for more information on how to get plants from other potential sources.

Any other suggestions that you have for our organization are also always welcome. My e-mail is [janet@hoffmann.net](mailto:janet@hoffmann.net). I look forward to a wonderful year ahead!

~Janet Hoffmann

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION ON DAN HINKLEY PRESENTATION IN MARCH PRE-REGISTRATION REQUIRED

### FROM SHADOWS TO SUN, THE MAKING OF WINDCLIFF

*With Dan Hinkley*

Join intrepid plant explorer, passionate nurseryman and garden designer Dan Hinkley as he reveals his process for designing his latest endeavor, The Gardens of Windcliff. Dan and partner Robert Jones are famous for Heronswood, a nursery and garden in Kingston, Washington they created and ran for over 20 years. For their new garden located

on 250' of south facing bluff overlooking Puget Sound, Hinkley has assembled a palette of Mediterranean and Southern Hemisphere plants arranged in a naturalistic style. Hinkley's presentation will take us through the development of the garden from inspiration to realization, including a discussion of plants that will translate to our San Francisco Bay Area gardens. Dan Hinkley is an in-demand horticultural lecturer and nationally recognized plant expert, with his own line of plants available from Monrovia Nursery. This talk is not one to miss!



### MEETING ATTENDANCE REQUIRES REGISTRATION

Due to the anticipated demand for this meeting, it will be required for ALL attendees to register. No walks-ins allowed if the event is sold out. Members are FREE and a \$20 fee will be charged for all guests and non-members. Registration is now open to Members and the general public. Register by clicking on the link to our Eventbrite site which can be found on our website. You will enter your name and email address and the number of members or guests you are registering. If you do not have access to Eventbrite and would like to attend, please contact Leslie Dean at 650 966-8364 for registration. Seating is limited so don't miss out on this opportunity.

## UPCOMING MEETINGS

**March 13, 2019**—Dan Hinkley, Heronswood Nursery, Kingston, WA. *From Shadows to Sun, The Making of Windcliff*

**April 10, 2019**—Ann Northrup, Foothill College, Merritt College. *Bugs You Hope to See Fewer of in the Garden*

**May 8, 2019**—Laura Hermanson, Landscape contractor, Farmscape. *Growing Community in Northern California Neighborhoods*



## JANUARY PLANT NOTES

### ***Lachenalia viridiflora*** (Hyacinthaceae)

Grown by Judy Wong in Menlo Park, this South African bulb blooms during the winter/ spring season. Found in the wild in only one remote location, it is endangered in its natural habitat but fortunately easy to grow. *L. viridiflora* is probably the rarest of all the members of this endemic Namibian and South African genus of about 115 species. Its unusual flower is unscented but the color is a unique turquoise and blossoms last up to two weeks. Bloom spikes reach a height of 4 inches and some plants even have spotted or striped leaves. The fruit is a dry membranous capsule containing numerous small, black, rounded seeds with a very shiny seed coat. In our area they seem to do best in containers, however if you plant in the ground they should have no summer water when the bulbs are dormant. Give them sun to part shade and well-drained soil.



*Lachenalia viridiflora*



*Ice Cream Banana*

### ***Musa acuminata* x *balbisiana* 'Ice Cream' or 'Blue Java'** **Banana**

Grown by her friend in Palo Alto, and shared by Katie Wong, this dwarf tropical banana can grow 15 to 20 feet tall. Foliage is spectacular, broad large leaves that benefit from wind protection or they will tatter. Blooming in spring, the orange/ yellow flowers grow on long drooping stalks which are quite striking. The fruit will ripen 70 to 100 days after bloom. Harvest the cluster of fruit when the top starts to turn yellow and allow the whole cluster to finish ripening at room temperature. The fruit has a creamy texture with a slight vanilla flavor. Sunset Western Garden Book recommends planting along a south facing wall to help sweeten the fruit, protection from frost in zones 14—16 is recommended. (Tender @ 20 degrees) Give ample water, rich soil and feed regularly.



*Musa acuminata*



*Fruiting stalk of Musa 'Ice Cream'*

## HORTICULTURAL HAPPENINGS

**Camellia Show** February 9 & 10, 12—4 PM. San Francisco Peninsula Chapter of the Camellia Society, 1400 Roosevelt Ave. Redwood City, Event located in the CAB Building.

**Montalvo Light Show** Happening now through March 17th. Highly recommended by Judy Wong. Tickets available on their web site.

[https://www.munromontalvo.org/?utm\\_source=wordfly&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=WeeklyNewsletter%253A11%252F1%252F18&utm\\_content=version\\_A&promo=](https://www.munromontalvo.org/?utm_source=wordfly&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=WeeklyNewsletter%253A11%252F1%252F18&utm_content=version_A&promo=)

**Quarryhill Botanical Garden** invites you to celebrate and welcome in the “Year of the Pig” on Tuesday February 5th. For more information on this and other events go to their website. <https://mailchi.mp/quarryhillbg/looking-backour-2017-annual-report-474033?e=3abcd37f72>

## BOOK AND PLANT TABLE

As mentioned at our January meeting we are inviting members to clean our their garden book shelves and bring any unwanted books to our February meeting to share with other members and help raise funds to support WHS. Please arrive early with your donations so that we will have time to price them. If you have a large quantity of books and can't make it to the meeting or want to drop them off early so that we may pre-price them, please contact Leslie Dean, [lesliekdean@mindspring.com](mailto:lesliekdean@mindspring.com) or Janet Hoffmann, [janet@hoffmann.net](mailto:janet@hoffmann.net) and we will make arrangements to get them from you. Plants are also welcome. As usual label them with the botanical name. A picture and cultural information for your plants are also helpful. Let's have a profitable sale and provide some interesting material to purchase!

## 28 YEARS AGO

Western Hort met on February 13, 1991 to hear Charles Burr talk about *The Very Small Garden*. Charlie had recently retired from the *San Jose Mercury News* as a garden columnist. (He was one of my favorite people and along with his wife Paula was a good friend to my parents, Ed & Jean Carman. When Charlie visited the nursery he always brought along interesting and/or hilarious stories to share, so I'm sure that was an entertaining as well as an educational talk.) The raffle that night featured two tables, one for plants and one for horticultural books (I can *always* find a book I need...). The *Pacific Horticulture Book of Western Gardening* by George Waters was available for purchase, the bonus was that George was on hand to sign copies.

WHS began a survey to be compiled by Ed Carman to “tabulate information about the effect of December's frost on Peninsula plants” and a survey form was included with the newsletter.

I think the Plant Notes have solved a mystery for me. For years I've grown a plant that came from my dad labeled *Erigeron x moerhemii*. It looks decidedly different than that plant from other sources. In February 1991, "Don Brandeau brought a plant that we used to call the pink marguerite, and indeed it was listed in Hortus Two and in the old Sunset Garden Book as *Felicia petiolata*, but it has disappeared from both these references entirely and Ed Carman says it is now *Erigeron petiolata*." After looking around on the internet, it appears that once again *F. petiolata* is the correct name and I think that is what my plant is as Dad's plant file notes he acquired it as a felicia in 1976. Del McCord brought *Vriesia hieroglyphica* "a huge rosette of golden green leaves formed into a vase with irregular markings in dark green and brown," *Achmea orlandiana* "rosette of narrow foot-long leaves, dark-banded on their lower surfaces, red flower stalk with yellow flowers & orange-red bracts" and *Buddleia asiatica*, recounted by Elizabeth Garbett in her inimitable fashion "In its native regions it is used as a fish poison but that is probably not a very useful attribute here." Sherry Austin showed *Abeliophyllum distichum* 'Rosea', "a fine and elegant shrub without invasive tendencies", *Camellia lutchuensis* (fragrant) and *C. japonica* 'Scentsation', "scented and gorgeous to boot." Day Boddorff of Baylands Nursery brought *Miscanthus sinensis gracillimus*, *Calamagrostis arundinacea* and *Uniola paniculata*: "three attractive grasses for dried arrangements" and "three cold and drought hardy manzanitas that he recommends as lawn substitutes": *Arctostaphylos* 'Emerald Carpet', *A. uva-ursi* 'Point Reyes' and *A. uva-ursi* 'Radiant'. "Betsy Clebsch's offering gets the prize for the longest names attached to the smallest flowers. Consider *Narcissus papyraceus panizianus*, for a paperwhite and *N. cantaturisus cilifoliosis* for a white form of the tiny hoop petticoat daffodil." Also shown was *Haemaria discolor* 'Dawsoniana' "chiefly grown for its beautiful leaves, velvety dark green with fine red parallel veins and red reverses" and *Asarum caudatum*, "our native ginger...evidently fertilized by some denizens of the dark and the dank—slugs or beetles or ants." *Rhodohypoxis baurii* were discussed: "These are So. African natives that need a completely dry dormant period (our winter). One is supposed to turn pots on their sides or cover those planted in the ground with a shingle. But Ed Carman, who has been growing them longer than anyone I know just leaves his outside in 4" pots exposed to the weather and they do just fine." Well, famous last words and all that, the freeze of December 1990 marked the almost complete annihilation of Dad's *Rhodohypoxis* collection. They truly *do not* like to be wet when they are cold.

~ Nancy Schramm



## JANUARY SPEAKER NOTES

We started off the new year with an entertaining talk by Frank Niccoli on what he calls the “kings and queens” of the garden, that is the trees. His first point was how people often have misconceptions about the breadth and depth of most tree roots. He pointed out that an established tree has 99% of its roots in the top 3 feet of soil. These roots can also spread 2-3 times the width of crown of the tree. Of these roots 80% are structural roots that support the tree, while around 20% are involved in absorption and transport of water and nutrients to the tree. Protection of the roots is an important part of maintaining tree health according to Frank. He especially emphasized the importance of the roots that form a flair out around the base of the tree. It is important that these roots are not buried too deeply or covered with mulch materials that will transfer heat to the roots. Generally 2-4” of mulch kept at least a foot away from the trunk of the tree is best for tree health, but the distance depends a great deal on the type of tree and its age. Care should also be taken in removal of plants or other activities that will disturb the roots of established trees. Frank shared several stories about situations where trees had been damaged by root disruption or applications of herbicides.

The main focus of Niccoli’s discussion was two common trees of the Bay Area, redwoods and oaks. Both of these trees have natural defensive mechanisms to discourage competition from other plants, called allelopathy. He suggests observing the trees to see what grows under them in natural settings for the best companion plants. For planting under oak trees, he recommends letting natural leaf litter remain and not to disk or till the soil, trying to disturb the soil as little as possible for planting. Ideally one will plant under the trees when they are young so that the companion plants and tree mature together. He provided a long list of plants that he has found do well under oaks including several native plants like *Physocarpus*, *Salvia spathacea*, *Ribes* and *Keckelia* as well as some non-natives including the many cultivars of *Deschampsia caespitosa*, *Ceratostigma plumbaginoides* and junipers.

In planting under redwoods, he emphasized the need to be aware of their many surface roots and avoid disturbing those of established trees. Again he had a wide variety of both native and non-native plants that he has found do well under redwood trees. For both redwoods and oaks, many of the flowering plants that he suggested need to be planted near the edge of the dripline so that they will receive adequate sun for flowering. Some of his favorites include *Oxalis oregano* (redwood sorrel), *Rubus parvifolia* (thimbleberry) and several ferns including *Polystichum munitum*, *Woodwardia fimbriata* and *Adiantum pedatum imbricatum*. For a complete plant list, e-mail your request to [info@westernhort.org](mailto:info@westernhort.org)

Throughout his talk Frank shared many anecdotes and stories about the plants he suggested that have come from his many years in the landscape business and from teaching students of horticulture. These included Native American uses for several of the native plants and his concerns over tree losses in California from the last drought and subsequent fires. He truly is a man who loves trees and is interested in protecting them and encouraging them to thrive in our landscapes.

~Janet Hoffmann

### Officers and Board Members:

The board welcomes our newest addition Carol Dahout, who stepped up to join the board at our January meeting. We are still looking for someone to fill the Vice President position.

President: Janet Hoffmann

Vice President: Open

Secretary: Leslie Dean

Corresponding Secretary: Laurie Schofield

Treasurer: Jennifer Doniach

Other Board Members: Richard Hayden, Jean Struthers,

Laura Wilson, Carrie Parker, Carol Dahout

Plant Discussion: Katie Wong

### About Membership in Western Hort:

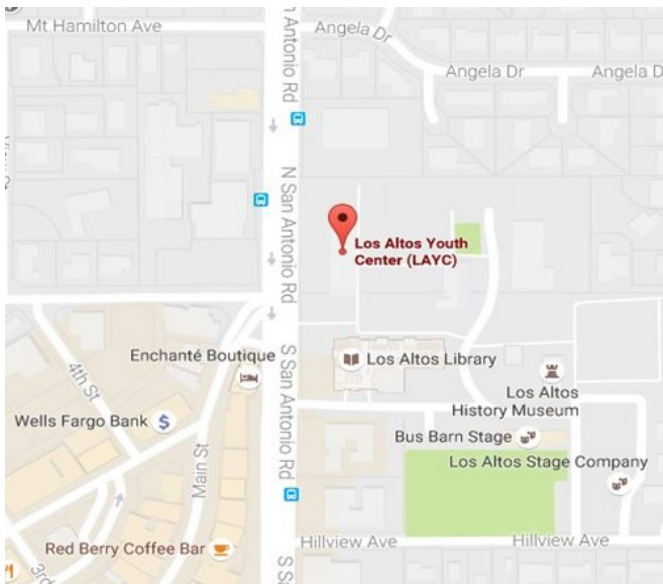
**Membership Rates:** A one-year membership (Sep-Aug) includes an e-mail copy of this newsletter and an e-mail copy of Pacific Horticulture Magazine. Regular membership is \$35, Family membership for two or more members at the same address is \$50, and a discounted rate for students is \$20. To receive a print copy of this newsletter by mail add \$10 to the membership fee listed above. To receive a print copy of Pacific Horticulture Magazine you will need to join Pacific Horticulture at: [pachort.org/join](http://pachort.org/join). WHS members can get a 10% discount on Pac Hort membership. Affiliate Organization Discount Code available by e-mailing us at contact e-mail below.

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PO Box 166  
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**Meeting location February:**

**Los Altos Youth Center  
1 North San Antonio Road  
Los Altos, CA 94022**

Main entrance and parking are on the north side of the building. Turn off San Antonio at the sign for the City Hall and Police Dept.

Check-in starts at 7:00 pm. and meetings start at 7:30 pm.

Would you like to **sponsor a lecture** for the WHS that is of particular interest to you?

It would be much appreciated!

Please call Leslie Dean at 650-966-8364.

**Newsletter Submissions**

The newsletter publishes on the first of the month. **Note deadline for submission for the next newsletter is the 22nd of February.** Submissions after this date will likely appear in the next month's newsletter. Send submissions to: [Kjanberg@gmail.com](mailto:Kjanberg@gmail.com) or snail mail to Kathy Anberg, 1332 Peggy Ct. Campbell, CA 95008-6342