

WESTERN HORT

September 2024 | PO Box 166, Mountain View, CA 94042 | www.westernhort.org

SEPTEMBER 2024 MEETING

September 11th, 7:30pm

The September meeting will be an in-person meeting this month. Meetings are free for members, non-member attendees are \$10.00. The meeting room officially opens to members and the public at 7pm but if you can arrive by 6:30 pm to help with set-up, your assistance would be greatly appreciated. Masks are recommended but optional. See page 7 of this newsletter for information about joining the Western Horticultural Society.

SPEAKER: MARK LEICHTY

TOPIC: FANTASTIC PLANTS AND WHERE TO FIND THEM

Mark Leichty will discuss and show slides of many of the rare and beautiful plants he has come across in some of the most beautiful gardens around the Pacific Northwest, California and beyond. He will also take a look at less rare, but perhaps even more important plants that he has come to refer to as his “Top Forty Plants for Western Gardens”.



Mark Leichty grew up on a grass seed farm outside Albany, Oregon where he still lives. Farming is in his blood but has been transformed from fields to greenhouses. He owned Fry Road Nursery in Albany for 25 years prior to being hired by Little Prince of Oregon as the Director of Business Development, where he’s been for the past 10 years, and was recently promoted to Director of Operations. He is a committed plant nerd and enjoys creating beautiful gardens full of rare and unusual plants. He has created two beautiful show gardens at the Northwest Flower and Garden Show in Seattle. He loves visiting beautiful gardens wherever he goes and is frequently out

visiting garden centers in Oregon and Washington with his partner in crime, Michelle.



There will be a speakers dinner this month

Meet the speaker and enjoy a wonderful meal at Chef Chu’s before the meeting. If you would like to join us, please email Western Hort member Carol Dahout at: caroldahout@yahoo.com by the Monday before the meeting so we can make a reservation for the appropriate attendance. Dinner for September will start at 5:00pm. Chef Chu’s is located at 1067 N. San Antonio Road, Los Altos.

CO-PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

We hope you and your garden have thrived in spite of the summer heat domes. You are welcome to share photos and descriptions from your horticulture projects (and travels) to WHSmembers@groups.io - subscribe by sending an empty email to WHSmembers+subscribe@groups.io

From the WHS by-laws, we note that several members are needed for our annual financial audit, an important task that requires only a very limited amount of your time. Another task requiring member help is nominating people for our board. Please let us know of your interest with a note to info@westernhort.org

Did you know ...

The Avestan word for 'walled garden' is pairidaeza; Avestan is a language from Persia 2000 BCE.

From that word comes the Greek paradeisos of the Old Testament, then further versions in Latin and Old English. Before 'paradise' was associated with celestial heaven, it was grounded in earthly gardens!

This information is imparted by Olivia Laing in her book, *The Garden Against Time*:

"Behind the rose-covered façade of the charming house in a Suffolk UK village, she discovered an intriguing walled garden, slightly over-grown and with an air of neglect that made it even more thrilling. 'We saw it in the January and, the minute that I stepped into it, I was aware of the seriousness of the planting,' recalls Olivia. 'The daphne was covered in flowers and there was a tree peony that was coming into bud. I could tell that this was the real deal. But it was half lost and I didn't want to over-tidy it. I wanted to keep the slight air of secrecy – that feeling of being on the edge of wildness. That's the sort of garden I think is really exciting."

~ Grace Tsang & Meri-Beth Bird

Wishing Betsy Clebsch a Happy 100th Birthday!!

Here is an update on Betsy from her family Bonnie & Sarah Veblen:

Hello dear friends and family of Betsy,

I hope you are all doing well and have been enjoying this beautiful summer. My mom, Sarah, and I wanted to be in touch, since Betsy's 100th birthday is coming up in just a couple weeks on August 29th -- wowie!

Betsy is slowing down more and more these days. Just a little bit of activity or engagement is plenty now, she has less and less stamina, and she gets overwhelmed pretty easily. She wants to rest more and more of the time, which is understandable.

Her memory and cognition have also been shifting some as well, and we wanted to let you know that at this point, phone calls and FaceTime are likely more confusing for Betsy than they are connective or supportive.

That said, Betsy's visual memory is still intact, and she enjoys seeing photos of people she knows and loves. For her birthday, we thought it might be nice if folks were to put a card in the mail. Including a photo of yourself, or even better a photo of you with Betsy, would help trigger her memory. Don't feel you need to get a print made — a photocopy of a photo is fine. Sharing a photo would be a wonderful gift to her and give her a way to have some moments remembering loved ones. Anytime in the next month would be great, so that she receives them a few at a time rather than all at once.

Thanks for your love and support of Betsy over the years.

Betsy's mailing address:

Betsy Clebsch
9657 Belair Road, Apt. 16 B
Nottingham, MD 21236

~ Warmly, Bonnie & Sarah Veblen (Daughter & Granddaughter)



MAY SPEAKER NOTES

Gardening for Habitat with Native Plants with Arvind Kumar

It may or may not be nominative determinism, but our May speaker's name can be translated as "lotus prince." His beautiful talk on the virtues of California native plants for the home garden was like the lotus flower, a symbol of refined sensibility and selflessness. When Arvind began to get interested in gardening, he was inspired by the late Richard and Bracey Tiede, who served Western Hort in several capacities over many years. Arvind began about 30 years ago with natives in his own garden, then volunteered at the native garden at Lake Cunningham Park in San Jose which continues to provide a wider canvas for his gardening studies.

The initial attractions for Arvind to native gardening were aesthetics and low maintenance. He described how his view became much more expansive by reading Judith Larner Lowry's book *Gardening with a Wild Heart*, in which she states, "A plant is not a couch." That is, plants and gardens are not static, inanimate things. Yes, gardening with natives can improve one's property value as well as create a haven for both exercise, relaxation and contemplation. But the creation of habitat (Latin for "it dwells") is the only benefit that isn't self-oriented. In our own back (and front) yards, we can help both birds and insects, which are in severe decline. Native plants have co-evolved with wildlife over millennia, and in their position at the bottom of the food chain provide the basis for a rich ecosystem.

General principles that Arvind shared for creating good habitat were: grow a variety of plants for their pollen, nectar, seeds, fruit and foliage; provide water (preferably trickling); include sheltering trees, shrubs and brush piles; and do not use toxic chemicals or synthetic fertilizers but use natural, organic alternatives. Arvind then gave us an extensive list of garden-worthy California natives, sharing some of their special horticultural characteristics and requirements. He also listed what he calls the "Lepidoptera Quotient" or LQ, the number of butterfly and moth species that lay eggs on the plant.

Highlighted plants that are particularly good for birds were: Toyon (*Heteromeles arbutifolia*), Coffeeberry (*Frangula californica*), Oregon Grape (*Berberis aquifolium*), Blue Elderberry (*Sambucus nigra caerulea*) and California Grape (*Vitis californica*). Plants listed that are more specifically favored by hummingbirds were Cobweb Thistle (*Cirsium occidentale*), Western Columbine (*Aquilegia formosa*), Scarlet Bugler (*Penstemon centranthifolius*), California Fuchsia (*Epilobium canum*), Island Bush Snapdragon (*Gambelia speciosa*), Black Sage (*Salvia mellifera*), Woolly Bluecurls (*Trichostema lanatum*), Bladderpod (*Peritoma arborea*), Fuchsia-flowered Gooseberry (*Ribes speciosum*), Pink-flowering Currant (*Ribes sanguineum glutinosum*) and Franciscan Manzanita (*Arctostaphylos franciscana*). Since passerine birds often rely on caterpillars, a rich source of protein and fat, and bird parents must make between 2300 and 9000 trips food trips to the nest per clutch, it's incredibly helpful to promote those high LQ plants.

Especially good for insects, including native bees, Arvind enumerated La Cuesta Ceanothus (*Ceanothus foliosus medius*), Coastal Gumplant (*Grindelia stricta platyphylla*), Lessingia, renamed *Corethrogyne filaginifolia*, California Buckwheat (*Eriogonum fasciculatum*), Coyote Bush (*Baccharis pilularis consanguinea*) and Holly-leaved Cherry (*Prunus ilicifolia*). All native wildflowers will also attract insects. For those who feel a bit squeamish about insect life, Arvind suggested simply replacing fear with wonder; replace "ew" with "awe". You can tolerate minor plant damage, or even copious aphids on milkweed, to obtain the satisfaction of contributing to a functioning ecosystem.

For butterflies specifically, Arvind listed Yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*), Checkerbloom (*Sidalcea malviflora*), Meadow Onion (*Allium unifolium*), Goldenrod (*Solidago velutina ssp. californica*), Coyote mint (*Monardella villosa*), California aster (*Symphotrichum chilense*), Sticky monkey flower (*Diplacus aurantiacus*), Narrow-leaved Milkweed (*Asclepias fascicularis*), California Buckeye (*Aesculus californica*), Coast Live Oak (*Quercus agrifolia*) and Valley Oak (*Quercus lobata*). To look up the LQ for any of these plants, you can use calscape.org to search and then scroll down to the appropriate section. The LQ numbers motivated me to go out and get a coffeeberry to add to a shady part of my garden. Soon the fall season will be upon us and offer opportunities to enrich our gardens with these worthy plants, or even "go native!"

~ Jen Dungan

Tiny Tree-Killing Bugs Found In South Bay

San Jose CA– Invasive beetles the size of a sesame seed could pose a threat to trees across the region after their presence was confirmed in San Jose, officials announced Friday August 23rd. This shothole borer is non-native and known to attack more than 65 tree species including box elder, California sycamore and Japanese maple trees. For more information go to https://ipm.ucanr.edu/legacy_assets/pdf/pestnotes/pninvaseshtholeborer.pdf

MAY PLANT SHARE

Leslie Dean from Mountain View, brought *Phacelia californica* (Rock Phacelia, scorpionweed)



Leslie shared this because she enjoys the unusual shape of this native wildflower which is a food source for the endangered Mission blue butterfly. Native to coastal Northern California and Oregon, it grows in chaparral, woodland, coastal bluffs and grassland. It is a perennial herb that grows 6 to 18 inches tall and one to two feet wide. Blooming in spring to summer, the white or lavender flowers are bell shaped and under a half inch wide. Grow in full sun to part shade, in well drained soil, give low to moderate water, never irrigate once established and it is hardy down to 15 degrees. There are a very large number of species in the genus Phacelia. Most are annuals. Look for species appropriate to your area and garden conditions.

Suzanne Legallet from Atherton brought a beautiful sample of *Lobelia laxifolia*. (Mexican Bush Lobelia) This large shrub is evergreen, perennial and flowers nine months out of the year. Purchased from Annies Annuals, Suzanne reports that it comes back if pruned heavily. Hers is in full sun, watered once a week and is 12 feet tall. Native to Arizona and Mexico, *Sunset* lists it as growing to three feet x three to six feet, spreading by creeping underground rootstock. Relatively well-drained soil is recommended and it can become invasive in moist soils. Able to withstand considerable aridity and neglect. Attractive to hummingbirds. Zones 7-9, 12-24.

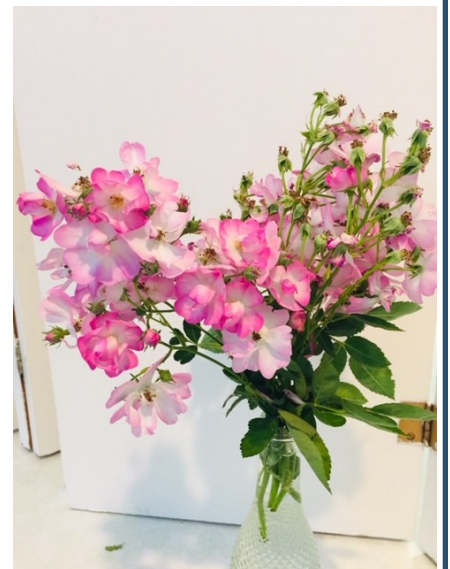


Judy Wong gardens in Menlo Park and brought a vibrant pelargonium to share. *Pelargonium* #9 and **Flor de Fuego** from the Uniques Group. Uniques is a catch-all group of plants, some of which date back to the 1860's in the United Kingdom. This plant was hybridized by Jay Kapac from Southern California. The brilliant orange red flowers with dark brown blotches and veins on the upper petals are stunning! Generally strong growers, the flowers can be small but the plants are very floriferous. This perennial shrub is semi-deciduous, grows in part sun and flowers in the spring. Requiring well-drained soil, Judy waters regularly and reports it is hardy down to 32 degrees. Judy also brought tubers of the *Gloriosa superba* plant to give to intrepid gardeners. Be sure to share your success stories if you were lucky enough to get one!

Janet Hoffmann brought in a sample of a rose she has growing in her garden. Propagated from a cutting, it is on it's own rootstock and grows to three feet tall with a bit of a spread. Janet hoped someone recognized it and can tell her the name. One guess was *Rosa 'Ballerina'*. A quick internet search seems to verify this guess. Bred by John Bentall in 1937, it can be grown as a specimen or in small groups in borders, cottage gardens or foundations and Rogue Valley Roses says it can even be grown as a climber. It is reliable and free-flowering and an award winner. This hybrid musk rose has good disease resistance and blooms continuously from summer to fall.



Photo credit: Rogue Valley Roses



Plant Share Continued:



Nancy Schramm from Gilroy brought :

Greyia radlkoferi - (Woolly Bottlebush or Natal Bottlebush) Native to South Africa, growing along rivers in misty gullies bordering evergreen forest and among rocks. This deciduous large shrub or small tree grows 3-15 feet high with yellowish smooth bark in youth, turning grey and deeply furrowed as the tree ages. Leaves are oval to heart-shaped, coarsely toothed and lobed at the base, sparsely hairy above and deeply woolly underneath. Individual flowers in the dense clusters are one inch long with deep red stamens projecting from the mouth of the petal tube. The nectar and pollen is eaten and collected by insects including butterflies and bees. Plant in sun or part shade and protect from frost when young. A cylindrical fruit capsule splits open at one end to release seeds in the autumn. Easily grown from seed or cuttings and both root faster if they have bottom heat. To flower well it needs colder, drier winters to set bud. Useful wood from this plant is used to make household utensils and for carving handicrafts.



xPyracomeles vilmorinii - (Vilmorin's pyracomeles) Nancy reports that this is a cross between a Pyracantha and an Osteomeles that ignored convention and interbred. Both are members of the Rosaceae family and the first recorded hybrid was a chance cross discovered in France in the 1920's at the Vilmorin-Andrieux plant and seed company headquartered outside Paris, France. Conflicting information on height has it between 3-4 feet and 10-18 feet. Nancy has the latter experience. Proven Winners grows one called 'Juke Box' but says it doesn't bloom much and recommends it as a boxwood replacement. It is the shorter version and is evergreen where the taller vilmorinii is deciduous, has abundant white flowers and showy coral-red fruits. Give both varieties sun to part shade, medium water and good drainage. Susceptible to fireblight. USDA zones 6-9.



Plant Share at the meeting resumes in September!

Look around your garden and bring us a sample of what you love most. Share it with the membership! Don't be shy. Even if you think the plant you love most is too common or not interesting enough it could still be something new or inspiring to someone else. Or, it may just be so lovely we will all enjoy just looking at it. Have a mystery plant that you want ID'd? Bring it, share it, let us all enjoy it. Thank you for sharing. Editor

UPCOMING MEETINGS

October 9th— Michael Mace and Garry Knipe, ***Fun with Moraeas, the "Peacock Flowers" of South Africa***
November 13th— Jill Sowards of Violetear Studio, ***Shade Plants for the Dry Garden***
December 11th— Potluck Social—No Speaker

MEMBER OPEN GARDENS TOUR



Two of our WHS members shared their gardens with us on May 5th. It was a perfect day to enjoy fellow gardeners and their gardens. Jen Dungan gardens in Mt. View and has a small but mighty garden which she makes the most of. It is a lovely retreat with front and back yards filled with a happy assortment of perennials and shrubs.

Janet Hoffmann's garden in Campbell is full of native and low water plants as well as fruit trees, a vegetable garden and a native meadow instead of a lawn. Thank you members for sharing your special retreats.



28 YEARS AGO

I hope everyone had a terrific summer filled with wonderful plants! Western Hort members were able to start this summer off right with a lovely garden picnic, just as they did on June 9, 1996. That year the picnic was hosted by Kathy Crane at Yerba Buena Nursery, at the original location off Skyline Blvd.

The June newsletter included a big thank you to all the WHS members who volunteered to make our display garden at the April, 1996 San Francisco Landscape Garden Show a big success. 21 members were involved in the design & construction, as well as looking after the display. Some of those 21 members are still involved in WHS, including Judy Wong, John Hammerschmidt, Roz Bray, Leslie Dean and me, Nancy Schramm.

The September newsletter announced the beginning of Western Hort's 1996-97 season with our first meeting on September 11th. *The Flora of Ecuador* was to be presented by Martin Grantham who was at that time employed at the Berkeley Botanical Garden.

New items for 1996 included our meeting place, which was for the first time, the Garden House at Shoup Park. Membership renewal forms went out with the newsletter, and for the first time there were spaces on the form for an email address and fax number. (Remember what it was like before email? Newsletter items had to be telephoned in to the newsletter editor. – NLS)

A tease for the October meeting was about the release party for the new WHS book *Successful Vines for the Peninsula*. And finally, a welcome message listing six new members included one familiar name: Janet Hoffman.

The September Plant Notes were filled with late-blooming perennials. (Please, everyone, start bringing plants to show the rest of the membership. Something in bloom, something worth growing or something you need identified; all are good candidates for display. – NLS)

"Barbara Worl showed several Michaelmas daisies as well as several other species." *Aster novi-belgii* 'Climax' – 6' tall with "huge pyramidal clusters of light blue flowers", *A. novi-belgii* 'Calico' – "white with conspicuous yellow centers", an 8" tall aster with "a rich blue-purple color and is earlier than taller forms and stays in bloom longer", *Aster laterifolius* 'Horizontalis' – "small leaves that become coppery in fall and tiny pale lilac flowers with pink stamens", *Aster x frikartii* 'Monch' – "large lavender-blue flowers from July through October", *Monarda punctata* – a white flowered form purchased from Claire Steed Butler's Meadowlark Nursery in Hollister, *Monarda didyma* 'Croftway Pink' – clear rose-pink flowers, *Amaranth cruentus* (*A. hybridus erythrostrachys*) – "An annual, to 6', tiny purplish-red flowers". Our plant note author, Elizabeth Garbett also wrote "Amaranths are only too easy to grow and contribute some serious weed species among which is tumbleweed." (note: *Aster novi-belgii* is currently known as *Symphotrichum novi-belgii*. I couldn't verify several of the aster names so just left all as they were then noted. – NLS)

Betsy Clebsch brought in "four summer-blooming salvias small enough (under 2.5') to be good garden subject." *Salvia* x 'Priscilla' – salmon-pink flowers, *Salvia gregii* 'Purple Haze' and *S. g.* 'Purple Pastel', and *S. nemorosa* 'Mound of Snow' – white flowers.

"Judy Wong's ruellia was hard to identify but I finally decided that *Ruellia malacosperma* was the closest match in Hortus." 3' tall, dark-green leaves, rich blue-purple flowers borne in pairs.

"Bob Young presented us with another mystery plant grown by our old friend Bill Duncan. Fortunately someone knew its common name of Mexican hat and that enabled me to find it in my Texas wildflower book." (Elizabeth id'd it as *Ratibida columnaris*, and I did find that name online, but more often it appears as *R. columnifera* – NLS)

"Members expressed so much interest in John Hammerschmidt's 'Granny Rose' geranium when he showed it last year that he went right home and propagated a whole bunch which he kindly brought to the raffle table."

"Lyn Dearborn always seems to have something exotic in bloom", she shared *Cuphea llavea* 'Bat Face' – with flowers of green, violet and bright red, a basket of impatiens – dark leaves and deep red flowers from Antonelli's, and a basket of "lush and gorgeous" tuberous begonias – fragrant pink flowers.

"Ed Carman showed us the new *Gaura lindheimii* 'Siskiyou Pink'. The pink is really a strong color and this plant has all the signs of becoming the next big hit in the nursery trade."

~ Nancy Schramm

HORTICULTURAL HAPPENINGS

UC Master Gardeners of Santa Clara - Drink what you grow. The Garden-to-Glass team will introduce six of their favorite plants that impart desirable flavors and aromas, ideal for crafting refreshing teas, infusions, syrup and other homemade beverages. Learn how to select, grow, maintain, propagate, and harvest such plants, to make the most of small spaces in your raised beds or landscape. With a special focus on sustainability and your sipping pleasure, this talk is sure to inspire you to optimize your garden! Details <https://mgsantaclara.ucanr.edu/events-calendar/?calitem=597380&g=84549> **September 18th, 7—8:30pm** at Los Altos Library in the Orchard Room, 13 S. San Antonio Rd.

Master Gardener Fall Garden Fair—October 5th, 9am-2pm Martial Cottle Park 5283 Snell Avenue, San Jose. <https://mgssantaclara.ucanr.edu/events-calendar/fall-garden-fair/Maps/>

Checkout other ongoing events, Plant Sales, Talks and Workshops at the Master Gardener website: <https://mgsantaclara.ucanr.edu/events-calendar/>

Save the Date!

Happening in November: **Bringing Back the Natives in partnership with Golden Gate Bird Alliance and California Native Plant Society** is hosting two conferences with **Doug Tallamy**, author of *Nature's Best Hope*.
Saturday, Nov. 16th at The Oakland Museum of California's James Moore Theater
Sunday, Nov. 17th at Santa Clara University's Mayer Theater

Strolling around the internet

High schooler develops innovative solution to fight major invasive species:
<https://www.thecooldown.com/outdoors/spotted-lanternflies-pest-control-student-invention/>

30,000 year old seed germinates!
<https://www.abc.net.au/science/articles/2012/02/22/3436826.htm>

Officers and Board Members:

Co-Presidents: Grace Tsang & Meri-Beth Bird

Vice President: **Open Position**

Secretary : Jennifer Dungan

Corresponding Secretary: **Open Position**

Treasurer: Eva Huala

Other Board Members: Jim Salyards, Carol Dahout
(More board members welcomed and needed)

Volunteer Committees and Responsibilities:

Plant Sale Table: Carol Dahout

Email and website maintenance: Ursula Haschke

Membership: Ursula Haschke

Publicity and Outreach: Grace Tsang

Meeting Tech: Grace Tsang, Jennifer Doniach,

Janet Hoffmann & John Hammerschmidt

Welcome Table: Pam Noyer

Speaker Program Committee: Leslie Dean (chair),

Nancy Schramm, Judy Wong, Glenda Jones, Eva Huala &

Meri-Beth Bird

Newsletter Editor: Kathy Anberg

Newsletter Contributors: Jennifer Dungan & Nancy Schramm

Scholarships: Grace Tsang, Jennifer Doniach,

Meri-Beth Bird, Janet Hoffmann & Nancy Schramm

About Membership in Western Hort:

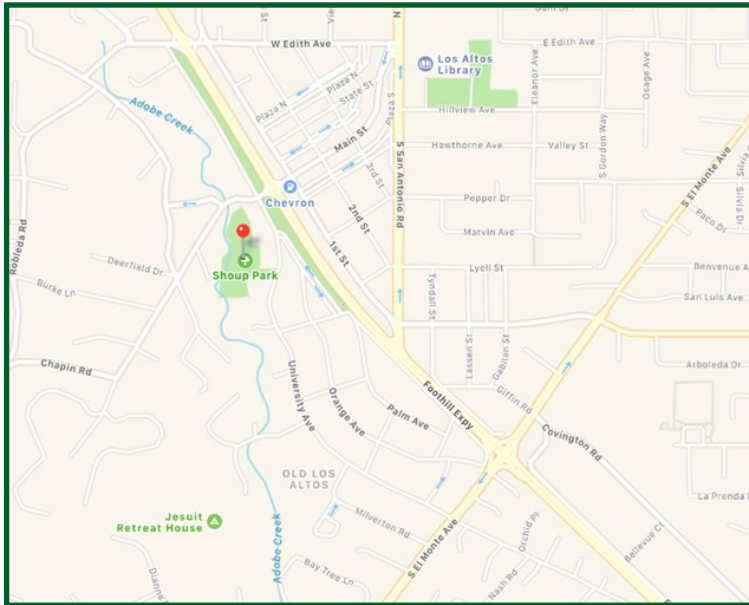
Membership Rates: A one-year membership (Sep-Aug) includes an e-mail copy of this newsletter and admittance to all of our monthly meetings. Regular membership is \$35, Family membership for two or more members at the same address is \$50, and a discounted rate for students is \$20. Please visit the Pac Hort page for more information or to join Pacific Horticulture Society, for whom we are now a sponsoring organization, go to: pacifichorticulture.org.

To join or renew visit our website at: <https://www.westernhort.org/membership> You may pay online with a credit card or print form and mail with your check to the contact us address below.

To contact us: Please send email to: info@westernhort.org or snail mail to: PO Box 166, Mountain View, CA 94042



PO Box 166
Mountain View, CA 94042
First Class Mail
VISIT US AT WESTERNHORT.ORG



Meeting date & location : September 11th, 2024
In Person at Shoup Park Garden House, 400 University Ave., Los Altos
(Masks optional)
Meeting starts at 7:30 pm.
Would you like to **sponsor a lecture** or suggest a speaker 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 20th of September.** Submissions after this date will likely appear in the next month's newsletter. Send submissions to: Kjanberg@gmail.com or snail mail to Kathy Anberg, 1332 Peggy Ct. Campbell, CA 95008-6342