



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

issue 17
Fall 2004



Sticky Monkeyflower - Color All Summer

Sticky Monkeyflower (*Mimulus aurantiacus*) is a small evergreen perennial shrub, about 24-30 in. tall and wide with dark green leaves and lovely tubular blossoms. The flowers colors range from maroon to pink to orange to yellow to white. This little plant is one of the mainstays of the garden because it flowers non-stop from spring to late fall.

The hummingbirds love this plant as do the native bees. It will reseed itself and is also easy to propagate from cuttings. This sun-loving plant will tolerate filtered shade. *Mimulus aurantiacus* requires good drainage and grows well in clay soils. It is hardy down to 20°F.

Sticky Monkeyflower has two strategies to make it through California's hot dry summers. The leaves are coated with a resin (hence the name) that minimizes water loss through transpiration. As the days get hotter, the plant produces smaller leaves, minimizing the surface area over which transpiration occurs. In the wild, it will lose leaves and go dormant during the hottest parts of the year. In the garden, weekly watering will keep it looking its best.

Plants may be purchased at local native plant nurseries such as Yerba Buena Nursery, California Flora Nursery in Santa Rosa, Mostly Natives in Tomales Bay and wherever Annie's Annuals are sold.

A good source is the California Native Plant Society's chapter sales in the fall. Watch the local paper's gardening section for details or check www.cnps.org/chapters/chapters_text_only.htm for links to local chapters.

Bracey Tiede

THE GARDENS AT HEATHER FARM
THE MEDITERRANEAN GARDEN SOCIETY
EAST BAY MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT

present

PLANTS AND LANDSCAPES FOR SUMMER DRY CLIMATES

with

Saxon Holt, Garden Photographer

Friday, August 27th – 10am to noon

at

The Gardens at Heather Farms
1540 Marchbanks Drive, Walnut Creek

- *Garden Photographer Saxon Holt will present his photos from the new EBMUD book, ***Plants and Landscapes for Summer Dry Climates*** (see inside for more information)
- *Tour GHF's new Waterwise Garden which reflect the concepts covered in the book
- *Book signing & refreshments in the garden
- *Books will be available for sale (\$34.95 soft cover, \$49.95 hard cover. EBMUD customers receive a \$5.00 discount.)
Checks and credit cards only.

Tickets are \$10. To make reservations please send check (made out to The Gardens at Heather Farms) to:
1540 Marchbanks Drive, Walnut Creek, CA 94618.

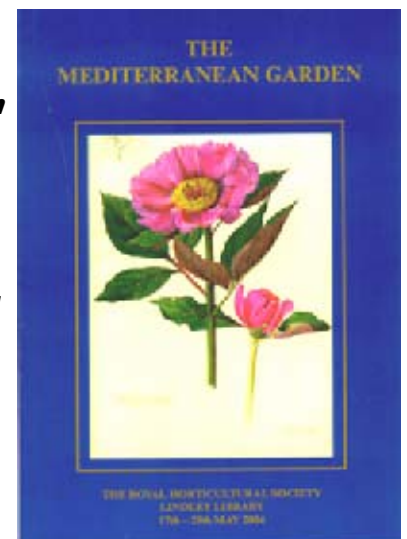
For information or to reserve by credit card, call (925) 947-1678. Please reserve by 8/24. Register early as seating is limited. Doors will open at 9:30am.

*The catalogue from the
UK Branch Exhibit*

The Mediterranean Garden
is still available!!

If you missed being in London for this interesting RHS exhibit, arranged by our sister branch in the UK, the beautiful catalog, created by Camilla Cox, reviewed by Richard Turner in the current MGS Journal, is still available.

Contact Freda Cox for more info:
freda@fredacox.freereserve.co.uk



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

of interest to our membership

August 23rd (Monday), 7:15pm, San Francisco
FLORA OF THE CHANNEL ISLANDS – lecture with Steve Junak, California Horticultural Society, County Fair Building, Strybing Arboretum & Botanical Gardens, Ninth Avenue at Lincoln Way, San Francisco, 415 566-5222, www.calhortsociety.org. Admission \$5 for non-members.

August 27th (Friday), 10:00-noon, Walnut Creek *
PLANTS & LANDSCAPES FOR SUMMER DRY CLIMATES
Slide presentation and book signing by garden photographer Saxon Holt. **See front page!**

September 2nd (Thursday), 7:30pm, San Francisco
NATIVE PLANTS FOR SMALL HABITAT GARDENS - lecture by Leana Beeman-Sims, Yerba Buena Chapter, California Native Plant Society, Recreation Room, County Fair Building, Ninth Avenue at Lincoln Way, San Francisco, 415 282-5066.

September 10th-11th (Fri-Sat), Santa Cruz
ANNUAL FALL PLANT SALE, featuring organically grown, regionally adapted vegetables and perennials, Friday noon to 6 pm, Saturday 10am to 2pm, Barn Theater Parking Lot, UC Santa Cruz, sponsored by the Friends of the UCSC Farm & Garden, Santa Cruz, 831 459-3240, www.ucsc.edu/casfs.

September 11th (Saturday), 10am-1pm, San Francisco
STRYBING ARBORETUM SOCIETY OPEN NURSERY PLANT SALE - featuring native plants and succulents, at the nursery, Strybing Arboretum Society/Strybing Arboretum & Botanical Gardens, Ninth Avenue at Lincoln Way, San Francisco, 415 661-1316 x354, www.strybing.org.

October 2nd (Saturday), Davis
30TH ANNUAL PLANT FAIRE - a show and sale of uncommon garden plants for the Central Valley, members' preview 8 to 10am, public sale 10 am to 4 pm, sponsored by Friends of the Davis Arboretum, at the Arboretum Nursery, Orchard Park Road at LaRue Road, UC Davis Campus, 530 752-4880, www.arboretum.ucdavis.edu.

October 2nd-3rd (Sat-Sun), Oakland
38TH ANNUAL FALL PLANT SALE - featuring plants, seeds, bulbs, books, and botanical art, Saturday 9am to 3pm, Sunday 9am to 1pm, sponsored by the East Bay Chapter, California Native Plant Society, Merritt College, Oakland (Redwood Road exit uphill off Highway 13), 925 376-4095 or elainejx@mindspring.com.

October 8th-10th (Fri-Sun), San Francisco *
GARDENING UNDER MEDITERRANEAN SKIES: EXPLORING CALIFORNIA STYLE - featuring keynote speakers and workshops on Friday and Saturday 8:30am to 5pm, optional garden tour (\$125) on Sunday 8:30am to 5pm, co-sponsored by Pacific Horticulture, LA County Arboretum & Botanic Garden, Strybing Arboretum Society, and The Mediterranean Garden Society, at Strybing Arboretum, call 866 MedSkies (tollfree), www.pacifichorticulture.org/medskies. Fee \$195 before September 1; pre-registration required.

October 9th (Saturday), Santa Cruz
ANNUAL FALL PLANT SALE - featuring native plants and plants from the collections, members' preview 10am, public sale noon to 4pm, at the Eucalyptus Grove (High Street and Western Drive), UC Santa Cruz campus, sponsored by the UC Santa Cruz Arboretum, 831 427-2998, www2.ucsc.edu/arboretum.

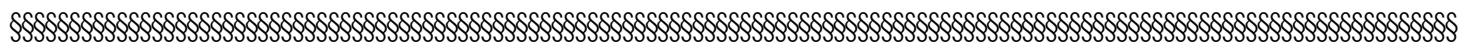
October 9th (Saturday) 10am-4pm, Los Altos
FALL NATIVE PLANT SALE - featuring hundreds of plants, seeds, and bulbs, plus books, posters, and note cards, 10am to 4pm, Hidden Villa Ranch, 26870 Moody Road, Los Altos Hills, sponsored by the Santa Clara Valley Chapter, California Native Plant Society, 650 941-1068, www.cnps-svc.org.

October 9th (Saturday), 9am-1pm, Santa Rosa
33RD ANNUAL NATIVE PLANT SALE - featuring a full range of plants, plus books, note cards, posters, and t-shirts, Santa Rosa Veterans Memorial Building, across from the county fairgrounds, sponsored by the Milo Baker Chapter, California Native Plant Society, 707 539-9005 or 707 829-6824.

October 13th (Wednesday), 7pm, Los Altos *
MUSINGS OF AN AUSTRALIAN GARDENER - lecture by **Trevor Nottle**, 7pm, Western Horticultural Society, Covington Elementary School, 205 Covington Road, Los Altos, 408 867-9428, JaniceGillmore@yahoo.com.
Trevor Nottle, who lives in South Australia, is also a founding member of the MGS.

October 16th (Saturday), 9:30am-2pm, Walnut Creek
BEARDED IRIS AND FALL PLANT SALE - featuring divisions from Mrs Bancroft's iris collection, 9:30am to 2pm, The Ruth Bancroft Garden, 1500 Bancroft Road, Walnut Creek, 925 210-9663, www.ruthbancroftgarden.org. Admission \$7.

October 20th-24th, Corfu, Greece *
MGS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the international membership – details were provided in the Spring 2004 newsletter (no.16).



***MGS sponsored event**



Heirloom tomatoes have become very popular these days, with several varieties now becoming available in produce markets as well as through nurseries and seed companies. Many of these unusual varieties trace their origins to various Mediterranean regions. While some Bay Area gardeners along the coast and in the path of summer fog sometimes struggle to provide enough heat to their tomato vines (reflected heat from paving or a south facing wall can help a great deal!), most regions offer enough heat/sun for these interesting and tasty vegetables. Those who have grown them know that the flavor of home grown tomatoes is far superior to those we purchase, but our many farmer's markets can provide you with tomatoes very recently plucked from their vines.

The following recipe comes from **MEDITERRANEAN VEGETABLES: A COOK'S ABC OF VEGETABLES (AND THEIR PREPARATION IN SPAIN, FRANCE, ITALY, GREECE, TURKEY, THE MIDDLE EAST, AND NORTH AFRICA, WITH MORE THAN 200 AUTHENTIC RECIPES FOR THE HOME COOK)**, by **Clifford A. Wright**, a fascinating book that lists both current and historic vegetables used in the Mediterranean, often with interesting anecdotes and quotes from famous writers of the ancient world. As a botanist who also likes to eat, I am intrigued at the large number of edible plants I had not previously considered, or even heard of!!

This work inspires an urge to do further research which will I'm sure will be quite enjoyable!!

Seán O'Hara

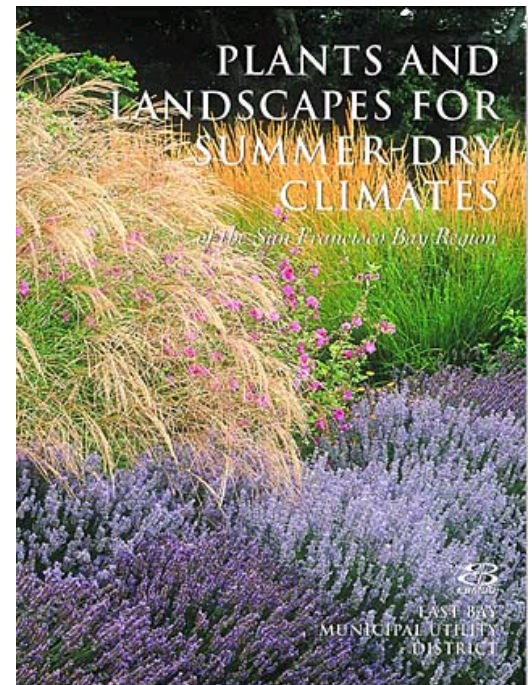
Ensalada de Tomates - Tomato Salad

As most people know, Andalusia is the home of gazpacho, but it is also the home of other tomato dishes that are just as satisfying, such as this pretty salad, which can be served as a tapas, too. If you can find a variety of different tomatoes, such as orange cherry tomatoes and teardrop tomatoes to throw in too, the salad will be all the more attractive. Make the salad about 30 minutes before serving at the earliest, and do not refrigerate it.

- 1 ½ pounds ripe tomatoes of different varieties and colors
- 1 ripe avocado, pitted, peeled, and diced or sliced
- 1 small garlic clove, chopped fine
- 1 tablespoon finely chopped fresh basil leaves
- salt and freshly ground pepper
- ½ teaspoon sugar
- extra virgin olive oil to taste
- very good quality Spanish vinegar to taste

Trim tomatoes and cut the larger ones and cherry tomatoes in half. Squeeze out the seed. Toss the tomatoes with the avocado and garlic. Sprinkle on the basil, salt, pepper, and sugar. Drizzle on the olive oil and vinegar and toss gently again. Serve.

Makes 4 servings.



Plants and Landscapes for Summer-Dry Climates of the San Francisco Bay Region

This beautifully photographed 320-page book features more than 650 native Californian and Mediterranean plants suited to the climate and microclimates of the Bay Area.

"Two years ago, when the East Bay Municipal Utilities District (EBMUD) commissioned an entire book of photos to encourage water conserving gardens, we began searching Northern California for the best plants. Many we already knew: the California natives - manzanitas, Ribes, and Ceanothus. We knew some of the time honored garden plants from the Mediterranean region, the lavenders and rosemary, Cistus and Santolina. And we had begun to hear of wondrous plants from the three other summer-dry climates of the world: coastal Chile, South Africa, and Australia. New plants were found: Leucadendrons, Melaleucas, and Puyas; old plants rediscovered: myrtle, coffeeberry, and Acacia. Soon, a new garden aesthetic began to reveal itself, one that matches gardens to the local climate. This is exactly what EBMUD hopes will happen by publishing this book - that gardeners will reduce their dependency on summer water and begin to explore the vast array of plants that thrive in summer-dry conditions."

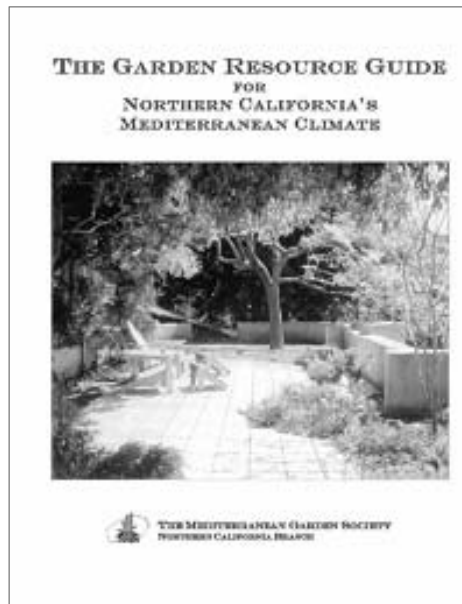
Saxon Holt, photographer,
on the making of
*Plants and Landscapes
for Summer Dry Climates.*

To obtain your copy, see you local book seller, or visit:
www.ebmud.com/conserving_&_recycling/plant_book

new from the
Northern California Branch
(available in October)

THE GARDEN RESOURCE GUIDE For Northern California's Mediterranean Climate

*ideas for visiting,
shopping, joining,
reading, learning . . .*



to order, send a check for **\$10.00** (includes postage & handling) to:

The Mediterranean Garden Society
Northern California Branch, P.O.Box 542 NL, Lafayette, CA 94549

We invite you to join the Mediterranean Garden Society to learn more about gardening in our unique and desirable climate. Memberships are for the calendar year (Jan-Dec), and all members receive the Society journal, *The Mediterranean Garden*, which contains articles written by members worldwide. If you join mid-year, you will receive all journal issues for that year.

Annual membership is ~~\$35~~

Life membership is ~~\$350~~

Send your personal check or credit card information to:

The MGS Secretary
Sparozza, P.O.Box 14
GR-190 02 Peania, GREECE
(International letter postage is ~~80€~~)
tel/fax: (30 1) 664 3089
email: bd@hol.gr

Payment of dues for the Mediterranean Garden Society includes you in this Branch if your address is within our range or 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, contact Sue Ann Manners, (925) 254-0226, or 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.
Editor: Seán O'Hara - sean@support.net



THE MEDITERRANEAN GARDEN SOCIETY
NORTHERN CALIFORNIA BRANCH
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