

JANUARY: PLANT OF THE MONTH



Bush Germander —
Teucrium fruticans Azurem

Upright silver foliaged evergreen shrub that grows to 4-5'. Covered in an iridescent, blue blooms year-round, but especially so in the winter months. Grown in full sun in the garden but can tolerate dry shade as well. A favorite of bees. Pairs well with CA Fuchsia and Bulbine in the sun and Limonium in the shade.



An UC Davis Arboretum All Star
http://arboretum.ucdavis.edu/allstars_detail_85.aspx

FEBRUARY: PLANT OF THE MONTH



Irene/Huntington Carpet (Trailing Rosemary) — *Rosmarinus officinalis*

We have both varieties planted along the wall entrance to the county office. It was planted about 8-9 years ago and really has never been touched. We trim it every few years when it grows far into the path below that it becomes a hazard. It blooms most magnificently this time of year, especially alongside the Ceanothus Valley Violet, but it blooms throughout the year. The bees love it. It grows about a foot tall, but then trails nicely down the wall. Some of the groundcover rosemary can get to 3-4' because the branches grow over one another. If you like year-round color/interest, low maintenance, minimal water need, fragrance, edible and something to attract beneficial insects as well as covering a slope or wall - Trailing Rosemary would be a great addition to your garden.



MARCH: PLANT OF THE MONTH



Golden Currant — *Ribes aureum*

This California native plant drips with honey like blooms in March. While it is deciduous, it is only bare for about 2.5 months. Unlike most types, which tend to be found in more woodland setting, this is found under oaks and in the chaparral, tolerating more heat and sun. It will eventually get to 6-10' tall and produces edible berries later in the year. Although it is typically grown for its berries, the flowers are also edible. A wonderful addition to any habitat garden as bumblebees, hummingbirds and Monarch butterfly flock to the flowers; several kinds of birds enjoy the berries.

UC Davis Arboretum All Star

http://arboretum.ucdavis.edu/allstars_detail_72.aspx

APRIL: PLANT OF THE MONTH



Chinese Fringe Tree —
Chionanthus retusus

Lots of plants to choose from in April, but since this one is only in bloom for a few weeks, I decided to highlight it. A UC Davis Arboretum All Star, this small tree (15-20') puts on a fabulous show in spring but is a strong background plant throughout the year. Has required no care except periodic irrigation in the 12 years since installed. A great addition to any garden.

For more info: UC Davis Arboretum All Star

http://arboretum.ucdavis.edu/allstars_detail_93.aspx

MAY: PLANT OF THE MONTH



Roses

While we have several different types, they all looked great thanks to the extra rain we got in April. Our rose selection includes a wonderful Iceberg Rose (sometimes grown as a climber, although ours is a large shrub), Imposter Rose, Betty Boop, Knockout and a few other shrub roses, as well as the Mutabilis Rose (aka Butterfly rose), which, while one of our favorites, must be sited properly as it gets to be at least 7' tall. All of them weathered the drought exceedingly well and thrive even though we only water every 2 weeks. Following the low maintenance philosophy of the garden they receive minimal pruning in winter and no fertilizer or pesticides. These roses truly demonstrate that roses really don't need to be coddled. Iceberg and Butterfly Roses are also part of UC Davis Arboretum All Star list

http://arboretum.ucdavis.edu/allstars_detail_74.aspx

http://arboretum.ucdavis.edu/allstars_detail_77.aspx

JUNE: PLANT OF THE MONTH



Desert/Yellow Bird of Paradise
Caesalpinia gilliesii

Unlike the more tropical /common Bird of paradise, these desert plants thrive in the desert heat and with little supplemental irrigation. The large cluster of yellow blooms with red stamen make this plant stand out in any garden. The small leaves typical of the desert create just enough shade underneath to protect plants from the hot afternoon sun, but has no adverse impact on full sun plants. Can grow to 8-10 feet , deciduous in winter except in the mildest climates Pairs well with the *Verbena bonariensis*.

JULY: PLANT OF THE MONTH



Desert globemallow —
Sphaeralcea ambigua

Also known as Apricot mallow, it is an ever-blooming native, small shrub/woody perennial. Usually found in desert chaparral in nature, but is a great addition to any garden. The plant grows to 2' and is covered with small orange-red blooms on grey green foliage. Best if planted on a slope with good drainage. Thrives in the desert. Constantly visited by hummingbirds and bees. Giving this plant a good pruning will prevent it from getting too woody.

AUGUST: PLANT OF THE MONTH



Crepe Myrtle — *Lagerstroemia indica*

This is a hybrid deciduous shrub/small tree. Provides an amazing splash of color mid to late summer. Tends to be slow to start but once established (3-5 years) it is the standout plant in the garden. Flower colors range from white, pink, fuchsia, purple and bright red; some newer varieties have purple leaves.

SEPTEMBER: PLANT OF THE MONTH



Purpletop Vervain —
Verbena bonariensis

Summer dry-hardy performer, with blooms atop the tall (3-4') sturdy, squarish stem all summer and fall. The bright purple flower is tuft-like and makes good cut flower (fresh or dry). The sparse foliage makes this a great accent flower that hovers high and blends well within the garden.

Note this plant tends to self sow and has been classified as invasive in some parts of the world

OCTOBER: PLANT OF THE MONTH



Dwarf Orange Cape Balsam—
Bulbine frutescens ‘Tiny Tangerine’

Succulent leaved clumping plant which grows to about 1' tall by 1.5'-3' wide. Yellow/Orange flowers bloom rise 8-12" above almost all year long. Great border plant; Great pollinator plant, all-in-all a great plant to add texture and color in the garden any season of the year; Minimal irrigation required – thrives in full sun to part shade.

An Arboretum All Star

<https://arboretum.ucdavis.edu/plant/cape-balsam>

MG of Alameda Co LIVERMORE DEMO GARDEN – 2018 PLANTS OF THE MONTH
NOVEMBER: PLANT OF THE MONTH



Blanketflower — *Gaillardia x grandiflora*
'Goblin'

If you want a generous, cool season plant, that is not needy, the Blanketflower is for you! This beautiful, showy perennial will add lots of color to your garden and home (great for long-lasting cut flowers). Blanketflower can be any shade of orange, yellow, red, or can be bicolored (my favorite!). Although it prefers well-drained soil, this plant is low-maintenance and tolerates a wide range of conditions. It is a great plant to use as groundcover or edging and can be grown from seed or divisions of vegetative parts; it grows from 10 to 12 inches in height. Plant this baby in full sun and dead-head it, so it will bloom for you from mid-June until frost. In addition to all its wonderful growing qualities, Blanketflower attracts bees and butterflies. This is a plant that will be good to you and your pollinating friends!

Check out this article on how to create bee-attractive gardens: <https://anrcatalog.ucanr.edu/pdf/8518.pdf>

DECEMBER: PLANT OF THE MONTH



Mexican Bush Sage — *Salvia leucantha*

Also known as “Velvet Sage”, this shrub is fun, a little unruly, and tremendously decorative in a garden or in a container. It produces masses of luscious, purple blooms on long spikes late summer to frost, attracting bees, butterflies and hummingbirds (yeeee!!!). A hardy, trouble-free perennial, it can take some abuse and neglect — it is very forgiving. It does very well in full-sun, but will tolerate some shade. This shrub’s main pet peeve is wet feet— it doesn’t like it, so plant it in a moist, but well-drained soil and give it a good soak every few weeks.

Mexican Bush Sage can grow to 3-6ft tall and wide and can be pruned to a desired size. Trim it down close to the ground in winter before new spring growth begins, and it will put on a fantastic show come summer. This shrub is on the “Outstanding Plants for Alameda County” list county [http://acmg.ucanr.edu/Outstanding Plants for Alameda County/Shrubs/](http://acmg.ucanr.edu/Outstanding%20Plants%20for%20Alameda%20County/Shrubs/)