

April 2009

Member of:
Desert Empire District,
California Garden Clubs,
Inc., Pacific Region,
And National Garden
Clubs, Inc.

Desert Planters of
Ridgecrest,
PO Box 841
Ridgecrest CA 93556
Website: [www.
desertempiredistrict.
org](http://www.desertempiredistrict.org)

Desert Trumpet

Officers:

- Shirley Craver
President
377-4629
sbcraver@verizon.net
- LaVerne Harms
Vice-President
375-9505,
Cell 793-4120,
harmsL@verizon.net
- Renee Oliver
Recording Secretary
solardancing@yahoo.
com
- Wanda Church
Corresponding
Secretary
375-6492
Church1@ridgenet.net
- Art Spiegel
Treasurer
446-7307
ajsbjs@earthlink.net
- Parliamentarian: *Open*
- LaVerne Harms
Editor
- Shirley Craver, Wanda Church, Renée Oliver and Art Spiegel
Contributors

The President's Corner:

By Shirley Craver

THEME: *Gardeners We Are, We Plant Our Gardens With Beauty*

Hello Garden Club Members

The Home Show March 28 and 29 was a success, we made some money and had fun doing it. We all enjoyed sharing the booth with the American Association of University Women. They were selling their publication the *Indian Wells Valley and Upper Mojave Desert Handbook*.

We sold 12 publications of our *Month by Month Gardening* book as well as plants, hats, cookies and muffins. Most of all we gained new members, James and Lorna McGuire.

Editor's note: Shirley Craver must have been a Girl Scout when she was a youngster, since she sold the most cookies. On Sunday there were unsold cookies. Shirley put them on a tray and went through out the Home Show hawking cookies, - - - she came back with an empty tray.

The Arbor Day Celebration at Mesquite High School, March 31 was enjoyed by the members in attendance. The students appreciated the bench that we donated and were very polite. It's a joy to honor the students and faculty. Thank you Gerry Wisdom for chairing this event.

The members are looking forward to the April 11 meeting with Mr. Marfisi's program "No Dig Gardening." Please join us prior to the meeting for lunch at Potpourri at the Carriage Inn, 901 N. China Lake Blvd. at 11 A.M. to meet Mr. Marfisi.

Penelope LePome has written informative publicity for the club this garden club year for the *Daily Independent* and the *News Review*. Lucinda Sue Crosby of the IWW Water District also published an article about "No Dig Gardening" in both our newspapers recently.

DOOR PRIZES:

Thanks to Judy Spiegel and Shirley Craver for donating the door prizes for the February and March Meetings.

BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. The financial report in hand out form was briefly discussed. No new bills were presented.
2. It was moved, seconded, and approved that the club extend a promotion to any visitor to our table at the Home Show of March 28/29, 2009. The club will give anyone who joins and pays membership dues during this promotion a \$5.00 discount to those dues (self or family) and give a gift egg (with gifts enclosed within). Voted and approved by all present to take the guest speaker Patrick Marfisi to lunch prior to the meeting at Potpourri at 11 AM.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS:

Alfred & Pat Claves
James & Lorna McGuire Family

This week is the beginning of the PASSOVER and EASTER.

Desert Planters of Ridgecrest,
P. O. Box 841, Ridgecrest CA 93556-0841

IRS Non-Profit Group Exemption Number: 5358

USDA Zone 8/9; Sunset Zone 10/11

ON THE WILD SIDE?

By Donna Thomas,
President of Oasis Garden Club of IWV, Desert Empire District Treasurer and CGCI Native Plant Chairman

Ruellia peninsularis—Desert Ruellia or Mexican Petunia

Ruellia is an evergreen shrub or shrubby perennial. The natural range of this plant is Baja California and the Sonoran Desert in rocky washes and on dry gravelly slopes. It is a member of the Acanthus family and, although native to the Sonoran Desert, it adapts well to the climates and soils of the low elevation deserts of California and Arizona. This plant grows two to four feet tall and two to three feet wide and is easy to grow in the roughest conditions of the hottest deserts. It is one of the toughest and most reliable of all summer flowering perennials. Ruellia has pale stems that are firm and almost woody with opposite leaves that are oval and smooth. The upright herbaceous stems bear blue to violet to deep royal purple petunia-like flowers and bloom from May to October. The flaring bell-shaped flowers have five shallow lobes. Each flower opens and dies in a day or two, but the pan bears so many blooms that the flowers are continually replaced and provide dependable color through the summer and occasionally through the rest of the year.

Ruellia prefers a sunny location and well drained soil, but will grow well in rocky native desert soils. Once established, plants require low water and will recover quickly with low water even after a period of drought. Ruellia is a good plant to use in areas of the garden that do not receive regular irrigation, but it will do better if given intermittent deep watering through the summer. It goes dormant through the winter but regrows vigorously in the spring. Leaves and stems will freeze at 32 degrees Fahrenheit but the plant is root hardy to 24 degrees F. The plant can be blackened by temperatures in the low 20s F. but there is rapid regrowth when the weather warms. Ruellia may be cut to within a few inches of the ground in early spring to rejuvenate the plant. Ruellia spreads when the small black seeds ripen and scatter with the wind. It also spreads from underground stems. *Ruellia brittoniana* may tend to become invasive, but you can keep it under control by how much water you give it and by using edging for the area where it is planted. Ruellia can be used as an informal hedge and is suited to poolside and patio plantings. It works well near buildings and can be used as a backdrop for other accent plants, perennials, and flowers. Ruellia can also be found with pink flowers (Chi Chi) and white (Alba) in dwarf forms that grow only ten to twelve inches tall (Katie). Locally you can see Ruellia growing along with Texas rangiers at the Walgreen store on the corner of Drummond and China Lake Blvd. ...

Facts for this article were obtained from the following sources:

The Low-Water Flower Gardener—Eric A Johnson and Scott

Millard
Native Plants for Southwestern Landscapes—Judy Mielke
Perennials for the Southwest—Mary Irish
Sunset Western Garden Book

By Donna Thomas

Editor note: You can contact Donna Thomas to order Ruellia plants. awyatt@ridgenet.net or 760 377-4525.

CLUB NEWS:

The March 14 presentation by Taryn Tree, landscape designer and owner of *The Tree House* was enjoyed by all. She went over the ten essentials of good landscape design and brought many specimens of plants to the meeting that she likes to use in her designs. The question and answer part of the program is always enjoyed by members and guests.

CGCI SPONSORED SCHOOLS:

Flower Show Schools

Course 4

April 14-16, 2009

Modesto.

Sponsor: Modesto Garden Club

Chairman: Judi Picinini

Contact information: Jpicinini@aol.com or 209-599-6821

Landscape Design Studies Program--Course 4, Series 22, San Andreas, CA

May 2-3, 2009

Sponsor: Calaveras County Garden Club

Chairman: Marian Coahran, 209-754-1573 or

mcoahran@goldrush.com

For a brochure of these schools see the website:

www.CaliforniaGardenClubs.org

BELLA ROSA NURSERY IS OPEN:

Desert Planters is happy to learn that Bella Rosa Nursery is open for business on Friday and Saturdays and other weekdays by appointment. Call 760-384-1448. The nursery features plants that are adapted for the Ridgecrest area.

- CALIFORNIA GARDEN CLUBS, INC. (CGCI) State Garden Club information www.CaliforniaGardenClubs.org.
- PACIFIC REGION www.PacificRegionGardenClubs.org
- NATIONAL GARDEN CLUBS, INC. for National Garden Club information—www.GardenClub.org.
- Desert Empire District (DED). To download the *Desert Trumpet*—www.DesertEmpireDistrict.org.

2009 CALENDAR

- April 8 to 10 **CGCI Wildflower Conference** at the Carriage Inn, Ridgecrest. Registration extended. For a registration form, contact Merrilee Ray at 760 377-5230 or Website www.CaliforniaGardenClubs.org.
- April 11 **Desert Planters Annual Meeting.** Election of Officers, 1 PM, Immanuel Ministry Center, 1201 N. China Lake Blvd.
- ◆ Speaker: Pat Marfisi, will show us how to garden the *No Dig Gardening* way. Mr. Marfisi has traveled the world to learn about organic farming. He joined World Wide Opportunities on Organic Farms, an international cultural exchange program. To inquire more about organic farming you can research at www.wwoof.org. He gardens in the Hollywood Hills.
 - ◆ Horticulture Chairman for this meeting is Renee Oliver. Please bring plant specimens from your garden for Show and Tell.
 - ◆ Door Prizes awarded, come and be the lucky winner.
 - ◆ Note Bylaw: Dues shall be payable in March, due in April and delinquent on June 1. Dues \$25 for a single membership and \$35 for a family.
 - ◆ Telephone Committee: Penelope LePome and Gerry Wisdom.
 - ◆ Hosts and refreshments—Sam Parsons and Marge Vargus.
- April 14 Chamber of Commerce Membership Luncheon, 12:00 noon at Victoria's at the Heritage (in courtyard at Heritage Inn). RSVP 375-8331
- April 28 **Board Meeting**, 1 PM, Immanuel Ministry Center, 1201 N. China Lake Blvd. All members welcome.
- April 28 **Descanso Garden Tour**—with Desert Rose Garden Club of California City. Gather at South end of the Wall mart parking lot at 8:00 AM for the rode trip. We will meet Desert Rose GC in Mojave at the Taco Taco Bell Restaurant at 9:30 AM. Entrance fee to Descanso and tram tour is \$10. Lunch on your own—12 PM. Leave the gardens at 2:30 for return trip home. Information call Shirley Craver.
- May 1 *Daily Independent* “GOING GREEN” Mesquite Hall, Desert Empire Fair—More information later.
- May 2 **2009 Spring Xeriscape Workshop.** Presented by IWV Water District, assisted by Desert Planters of Ridgecrest & Desert Artists’ League. Host: Sheri Quist
- May 9 **Anniversary Meeting**—Installation of officers. Meeting to be held at local restaurant—TBD
Bylaw: An Audit Committee comprised of the treasurer and two volunteers will do an audit of the club books two weeks prior to the May officer installation meeting.
- May 11 Desert Empire District Meeting. 9:30 AM. Hosts: Desert Rose Garden Club and Boron Garden Club. Located at the Community Center, 10400 Heather Street, California City. Please make a reservation with President Shirley Craver, 377-4629, lunch is \$5. Support Ways and Means Auction.
- June 4-9 CGCI 78th Annual Convention, San Mateo. Host Bay Ocean and Santa Clara Valley Districts. See the website for more information. www.CaliforniaGardenClubs.org.
- June 15 DED Post Convention Meeting. 9:30 AM. Host Oasis Garden Club of IWV.

Charter Motto:
“ Make Ridgecrest Clean and Green ”