

12 December 2005

**Final Report on the Slossen Research Endowment for Ornamental Horticulture:
University of California Botanical Garden New Plants Program**

This grant was obtained by former Garden Director Ellen Simms and Former Garden Manager David Brunner to initialize a formal program for the introduction of new plants for ornamental horticulture from the University of California Botanical Garden. Lawrence Lee was hired as New Plants Program Coordinator in June of 2002. Larry was to execute the grant and coordinate all aspects of the program.

The original grant proposed entering into a series of contractual relationships with growers and nurseries aimed at introducing new plants into the trade. Larry expended considerable time working with the intellectual properties office at the University of California in an effort to define the terms of contractual arrangements with commercial growers. After much effort with representatives of the UC Berkeley campus and with UC system wide, he concluded, and former director Ellen Simms concurred, that time and effort, not to mention the legal costs and ultimate requirement to share any and all profits with the University, made the prospect of entering into contractual relationships with nurseries and growers untenable. Subsequent discussions with staff at other UC campuses revealed similar experiences.

After deciding that contractual relationships were not feasible given Garden staffing and University legal requirements, the Garden focused on growing and introducing high quality horticultural material through more realistically available routes. We combined our New Plants Introduction Program with our Volunteer Propagation Program, restructuring both in a manner that provided unpaid staffing for work with new plant introductions under the direction of the New Plants Introduction Program Coordinator. A number of taxa identified in the proposal have been selected, evaluated, and propagated, including specific color clones of *Babiana* and species and hybrids of *Beschorneria*. We have made these available as focused introductions at our regularly scheduled plant sales. We have greatly expanded our offerings of *Lapageria rosea* cultivars and have initiated an extensive hybridization project. Select hybrids are currently under evaluation for introduction into the trade. We have created a small catalog listing over 20 *Lapageria* varieties, and are pursuing introductions of seedling stock through several growers. Hybrid climbing hydrangeas have reached blooming size and we are in the process of back-crossing with parent taxa to obtain some of the desired characteristics (hardiness and pink or red color).

Models of informal collaboration with the horticulture industry used at UC Santa Cruz Arboretum provided a basis for several successful contacts with local growers. For example, Annie Hayes of Annie's Annuals in Richmond, CA has introduced a series of choice California native plants from the Garden. We have begun dialog with Suncrest and Rosendale Nurseries on introductions of plants from the Garden's Southern African collection. The Garden is working with Pacific Horticulture Magazine to introduce a

floriferous and fragrant *Furcraea* from the Garden's New World Desert Collection through the Pacific Plant Promotions program.

The Garden has identified several taxa that are being propagated and tested for more widespread release. For example, vines of the asteraceous South American genus *Mutisia* are currently not available in the trade, but we have had good success in propagating several species from seeds and cutting. A number of variegated taxa have been selected from the collection, including a striking *Heterocentron* from Central America that is currently under evaluation.

Grant funding allowed the Garden to hire a staff person to coordinate the New Plants Introduction Program. Obviously part of a long term effort, we consider the project to date a solid success and we have found new funding to support this position on an on-going basis. While the routes of introduction described in the proposal did not prove feasible, we have identified alternative methods of introduction and will pursue these and other collaborative relationships with growers and with other botanical gardens. While royalty and other licensing fees did not materialize to support the program, increased revenue from expanded plant sales and through informal relationships with growers has allowed us to maintain the program indefinitely. Trust support has allowed us to establish a solid program that continues to define and solidify realistic routes for new plant introduction from the University of California Botanical Garden. Please watch for new and exciting taxa from our extensive collections!

Grant funds were utilized to hire a New Plants Introduction Coordinator. Given the problems we faced with licensing and trade making, we decided that a solid staffing base was the best use of grant funding, and one that would allow the Garden to define and establish an ongoing program. The Garden budget picked up the costs of all supplies and material used by the program.

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