

The Bulb Garden

Volume 3, Issue 3

Fall 2004

Pacific Bulb Society Board of Directors

- President: Cathy Craig:
CathyCraigEA@hotmail.com
- Vice President: Marguerite English
MEEnglis@cts.com
- Sec-Treasurer: Jennifer Hildebrand
TheOtherJen8@Yahoo.com
- Forum and WIKI: Mary Sue Ittner
MSIttner@mcn.org
- Membership: Pat Colville
Pat.Colville@JHRResearchUSA.com
- BX Director: Dell Sherk
DellsS@voicenet.com
- Newsletter and Website:
Cathy Craig (see above)

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Inside PBS

About mid-year this year we lost our newsletter editor, Marguerite English, who could no longer continue in this capacity, even though she continues as a PBS member and contributor to our email forum.

I assumed responsibility for the design and production of our newsletter after Patty Colville and I got our second membership directory out this summer.

While the newsletter layout took a lot of time, it took even more time talking with printers, getting quotes, etc. As it turns out, it is very expensive to have a commercial printer print a small publication with a relatively small circulation number.

After much research into printing in-house vs. contracting out the printing of our newsletter, we decided to print in-house. The board approved the purchase of MS Publisher 2003 and a large format printer; HP 9650, and I took on the task of editing, designing, and printing the newsletter from my office in San Clemente.

It's been an interesting experience and as you might guess, below the surface things became a lot more complex than I ever thought possible. I have had to learn aspects of MS Publisher that

I never had occasion to know before even though I have used it for nearly 10 years. The printer research alone took a couple weeks of intensive work. And that was just to buy it.

There was then learning to use it in conjunction with Publisher.

Of course there is a bright side (not counting my increasing publishing skills): because we are doing our own printing, we can have color on every page! We won't have to confine ourselves to putting all the color photos together onto a sheet or two and can let them occur in articles where they fall normally. We will save between \$3,000 and \$10,000 over the course of the next two years by printing our newsletter in-house – and it will be a lot better newsletter than we otherwise could have afforded.

While we only got three newsletters out for the 2004 year (this is number 3) we are lucky we got three out. Even after all the research, design, and editorial work



was completed, the printing was a whole new world. It took the better part of a week to actually print the newsletter, get it to dry flat, collate and fold them, fold again for mailing, affix mailing labels, and apply the postage.

So, while many of you may grouse about the tardiness of the newsletters in 2004 (who me...complain?) we will reap the rewards over many years to come with a better, more beautiful, and ultimately longer newsletter.

Enjoy!

PBS President, Cathy Craig

Our "Inside the Garden Gate of PBS" photo for this issue is a photograph I took of a home in Laguna Beach, CA, during the "2004 Laguna Beach Garden Tour". Editor

Editorial

Renew your membership now!

Memberships in PBS expire at the end of each calendar year.

Your personal year of expiration (most being 2004) appears on the address block or mail label on this newsletter.

Please send your check for renewal \$20 (US), or \$25 (outside US) to:

Pat Colville PBS memberships
1555 Washburn Road
Pasadena, CA 91105 USA

Membership Benefits:

- International email forum (nearly 300 members at last count)
- PBS wiki with thousands of color photos of bulbs
- Newsletters
- Local dinners with lectures, travelogues, and often bulb auctions
- PBS very popular BX (Bulb & Seed Exchange).

2005 PBS Bonus!

Due to the reduced number of newsletters we produced in 2004, we are giving every person who was a member of PBS in 2004 a special bonus.

Each person who was a member in 2004 will receive a FREE \$10 CREDIT for the BX good for any offering of the BX during 2005.

While you will NOT receive a paper credit, just place your order(s) in 2005 as your normally would. Dell will keep track internally and adjust your "balance due" appropriately.

Calendar of Upcoming Events

Third International Clivia Symposium coming to Southern California in 2005!

The Third International Clivia Symposium is coming to the Huntington Botanic Gardens on March 26 & 27, 2005.



The symposium is co-sponsored by the Pacific Bulb

Society, North American Clivia Society, and the Huntington Library, Art Galleries, and Botanical Gardens.

Make your Plans Now!

The symposium falls on the last weekend in March, which is Easter



weekend, so you will need to plan extra carefully in order to attend.

There will be speakers from all over the world; all internationally-recognized clivia experts.

Don't Miss this Event!

The clivia symposiums are not regularly scheduled events, so be sure to attend this one. You may register now and also find more

symposium details right here. See the single-sheet insert in the middle of this newsletter.

Check for updates!

For updated information and a downloadable registration form (for all your cliviaophile friends), please visit the website of the North American Clivia Society (NACS) at: www.NorthAmericanCliviaSociety.org



All clivia © David Conway 1998-2004
CONTACT INFO for Dave Conway: S.B.Clivias@att.net

Refer a Friend for Membership and Get a Free Bulb

Many of our members join the Pacific Bulb Society because a friend tells them about us. We'd like to give you a little gift when this happens.

If you refer a friend who joins PBS, please let our membership director know. You can email Pat Colville at Pat.Colville@JHResearchUSA.com.

Or your friend can email Pat. Or your friend can put a note on his or her membership application form.

This offer also applies to GIFT MEMBERSHIPS. Just write FREE BULB on the new member's application form with your name as the referral person.

MEMBERSHIP FORM is available at our website: www.PacificBulbSociety.org and scroll down to "membership form".

This offer is good through March 31, 2005. Hurry!



Donate to the BX

The BX (Bulb Exchange) was an idea originally suggested a few years ago by Dr. James Waddick, author of several excellent bulb and plant books and co-founder of the Variegated Plant Society.

The BX is one of PBS' most popular member benefits.

Dell Sherk (dells@voicenet.com) is our super-organized BX director. To date he has put over 80 BX offerings on the table for PBS members.

When you re-pot or re-dig a gar-

den bed, or anytime you find you must divide bulbs or plants, or when you have seed pods, please send your extras to Dell.

Just clean them and make sure they are labeled. We try to offer bulbs and seeds that are true-to-name. If you do not know exactly what you have, then just give Dell the best description you can.

It's easy to contribute to the BX!

Send clean and labeled bulbs, tubers, corms, rhizomes, etc. and seeds to our BX Director:
Dell Sherk—PBS BX
PO Box 224
Holicong PA 18928

The BX continues to be one of PBS members' most popular benefits. To date PBS has made over 80 BX offers to members.

Ed.

Dells@voicenet.com
(215) 862-0438

Garden Humor

You Say You're Out of Seed Germination Space?



This photo was contributed by Arnold Trachtenberg—sent to him by a friend. Ed.



Arnold himself!

Advertise With Us & Get Your Message Out There!

Our members loyally support our advertisers.

The advertising rates are simple: \$10 per column inch per issue, any size available. We don't require 'camera ready art' copy. We will design and set up your ad for you. We make it easy for you!

Let our members know that you are out there and what you sell.

Offer catalogs, and list your website in addition to your other contact information.

Let them know if you have special rates or offers for PBS members.

Encourage them to order early by suggesting a deadline or offer a discount for orders received by a certain date.

Make suggestions for plants and bulbs that are your personal favorites.

Include a sketch, photo, or ask us to find and include one for you.

CONTACT INFORMATION:

Contact our Editor, Cathy Craig at
CathyCraigEA@hotmail.com

Smoke Reveals Mystery of How Seeds Sprout

By Heather Catchpole—ABC Science Online

The active ingredient in bushfire smoke that helps seeds to germinate has been discovered by Australian researchers.

PhD student Gavin Flematti and colleagues from the [University of Western Australia](#) published their research online today ahead of print publication in the journal [Science](#).

Many Australian plants, like the acacia, depend on the heat from fires to crack open their seeds before they can germinate.

But bushfire smoke can play an even bigger role in seed germination. So, since the 1990s scientists have been trying to identify which of the thousands of chemicals in bushfire smoke is the crucial trigger.

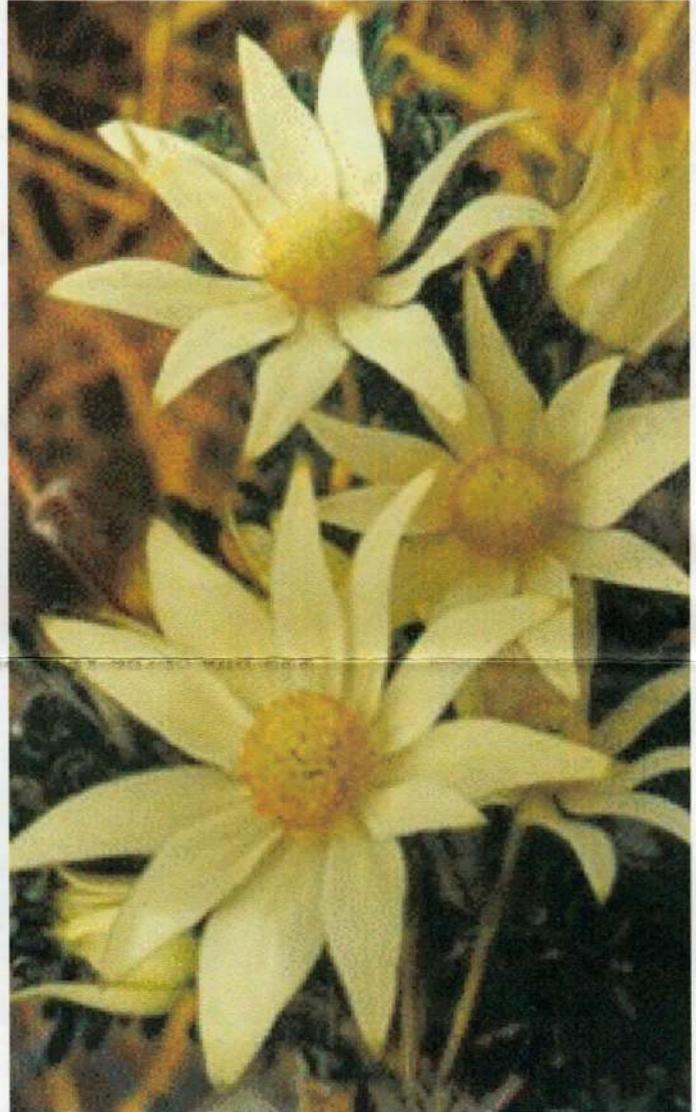
Now an Australian team has found that chemical, after sifting through about 4000 others in plant-derived smoke.

The chemical, a butenolide, is new to science and is made up of a heterocyclic ring of carbons, and other atoms. It also comes from a class of compounds never before found in plants or animals.

Team member Dr Kingsley Dixon, director of the [Kings Park and Botanic Garden](#) in Western Australia, said the finding represented 11 years of work.

"It's been so long coming that we just look at the amazing results and think, what a lot of work."

Dixon said the team was one of several international teams searching for the active ingredient.



Fire-dependent plants, like these Australian native flannel flowers, benefit from an ingredient in bushfire smoke (Image: Kingsley Dixon)

"It was the proverbial needle in a haystack," said Dixon. "Being Australian we decided to be maverick and look at a different approach using unique separation chemistry."

This involved separating the chemicals with a syringe containing an ion-exchange resin. Depending on its composition the resin removed growth promoting, growth suppressing or neutral chemicals.

The researchers then found they had a much smaller pool of chemicals to search through. They then isolated the chemical.

Flematti said this was the first time the active ingredient in smoke that assists germination had been identified.

"We have not only identified it, we isolated it and synthesized it to confirm its activity," he said.

The chemical germinates seeds from many types of plants, Flematti said, not just fire-dependent species.

For example, the researchers tested it on lettuce seeds, because of their quick germination time.

In the test group, 90% of the lettuce seeds germinated when the chemical was added, compared to 40% in the control group.

The researchers also tested native Australian and North American species. In the wild, less than 5% of the seeds of some native Australian species germinate. With the chemical, this increased up to 80%.

But Flematti said the researchers didn't yet know how the chemical acts on the seed and which part of the seed responds to the chemical.

Although heat from bushfires also helps seed germination in some species, Flematti said smoke was a "more universal cue".

It also allows seeds to germinate in the seed bank, fallen seeds buried quite deep in the soil.

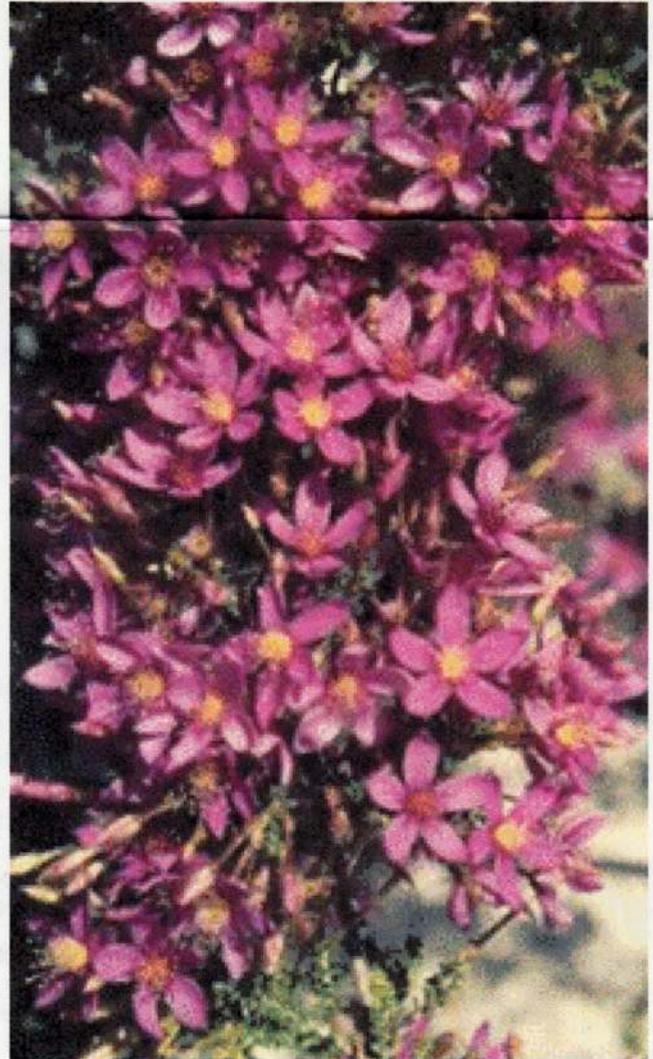
"When a fire goes through there is a lot of heat on the surface, but that doesn't get down to the seed bank below," he said.

But when it rains, the rainwater filters the smoke that has settled on the soil surface down

According to Flematti the chemical could find uses in land restoration, including rehabilitation of degraded land and land damaged by mining activities.

"Mining companies have an obligation to replace the native species that were wiped out and that isn't always easy," he said. "Some are very difficult to germinate."

Flematti also thought it could eventually find use in horticultural and agricultural areas and even in the cut-flower industry, which values native Australian flowers such as fire-dependent banksias and kangaroo paw.



Star flowers (Image: Kingsley Dixon)

Officers' Reports

BX—Bulb Exchange Report **BX/SX Director: Dell Sherk**

BX Offerings exceed 70!

Our BX continues to thrive thanks to our generous donors and enthusiastic participants. As of September, we have had more than 70 online offerings.

SALE COMING Watch for an all-forum clearance sale late January or early February.

Remember to donate to the BX! See directions on page 3. **Don't forget to use that \$10 credit we have extended to all dues-paying members for 2004.**

Thanks to all of you!



Dell Sherk—BX

Membership Report **Director: Pat Colville**

PBS now has 118 members! Please welcome these new members:

Patty Allen
Jerry John Flintoff
Nancy Gilbert
Sherry R Heyman
Elizabeth Mize
Grieg Warner

Welcome all!!

(This may not be a complete listing. At the time of publication, our membership director, was out of the country and could not be reached for a last minute update. Apologies to anyone I have inadvertently left out!)

Meeting!

The last directors meeting was held on August 8, 2004. Present were: Cathy Craig, Marguerite English, Jennifer Hildebrand, and Pat Colville.

We reviewed the amended Arti-

Treasury Report **Treasurer: Jennifer Hildebrand**

Checking Bal 1/1/4 \$5,536

INCOME

Members US	1,720
Members Intl	200
SX/BX	3,391
Advertising	30
Donations	26

Total Income 5,366

EXPENSES

Newsletter	640
SX/BX	498
Internet	85

Total Expenses 1,223

NET INCOME 4,144

Checking Bal 9/30/04 \$9,680

Vice President Report **VP: Marguerite English**

I am regretfully having to tend my resignation as VP of PBS. Our president, Cathy Craig, has already found a qualified candidate for this position. [More news here later. Ed.]

Minutes of the last Directors' Meeting

cles of Association and By Laws and passed them unanimously.

With regard to the budget, the board voted (earlier) to upgrade the newsletter by improving the quality of the paper, adding more color photos, and putting in more short articles on bulbs and gardening. This is our second issue containing 8 pages.

Our treasurer, Jennifer Hildebrand, is to submit the paperwork to the IRS so that the Pacific Bulb Society will become a tax-exempt organization.

Email Forum and Wiki Report **Administrator: Mary Sue Ittner** **Committee of Wiki helpers:**

Mark McDonough, Mark Wilcox, Jay Yurch, Dave and Linda Brastow
List Helper: Arnold Trachtenberg
Tech Support: Mark Parrott

Our PBS list continues to grow and now has 292 subscribers.

The wiki continues to grow and is becoming an increasingly helpful resource about geophytes. Ninety-two people have contributed pictures or information to the wiki. We now have wiki pages for 213 genera with various degrees of information on each. New images and information continue to be added to the wiki and we are enjoying the continuing participation of new contributors.

To facilitate viewing, separate folders have been created on the wiki files page for genera with at least 15 images (plus some others with not quite 15 images as yet).

President Report **President: Cathy Craig**

I continue to oversee operations, chair the directors meetings, and lend a hand where necessary.

I have taken over the newsletter production formerly performed in a remarkably efficient fashion by our Vice President, Marguerite English.

Both Jennifer Hildebrand and Pat Colville volunteered to spend time searching for a secretary. [This position is still open].

Pat Colville agreed to put together the data needed to publish our second PBS membership directory. [This new directory was mailed out last 2004.]

The next Board of Directors meeting is as yet unscheduled, but will likely be held in January or February of 2005.

Book Review: *Crocosmia* and *Chasmanthe*

By Charles Hardman

In this book, International Bulb Society Herbert Medalist Peter Goldblatt continues his Paul Bunyanesque strides through the Iridaceae, revising and revitalizing two more genera in that vast family. Goldblatt is joined in authorship by John Manning, with whom he has published books and research papers previously.

Also on board is architect Gary Dunlop, whose observations on growing plants in his Northern Ireland garden contribute much to this book from a gardener's perspective.

Rounding out the team, Auriol Batten, botanical artist extraordinaire, supplied the illustrations.

While *Crococsmia* and *Chasmanthe* tend to be bit players in the world of garden plants, they are *rugged* bit players, blooming consistently, reproducing faithfully, and demanding little in the way of fussy care or attention (although a bit of fertilizer from time to time is appreciated).

Crococsmias come to our gardens mostly in shades of orange, gold, yellow, tan, brown and red, with the ubiquitous, stunning red cultivar 'Lucifer' being grown and enjoyed throughout the horticultural world.

The authors have determined that the genus *Crococsmia* has eight species, two naturally occurring hybrids and more than 400 cultivars which are included in a comprehensive "Descriptive List of Cultivars" near the end of the book. Plants of these cultivars range from 18 inches tall ('Aisha') to more than four feet ('Achilles' and 'Lucifer') and all heights in between. Note is made by the authors:

"We point out that many cultivars are no longer extant, possibly as many as half of those (400) listed here."

Many of us know *Crococsmias* as *Montbretias* and the authors lapse into the "Montbretia" mode when they write in the list "Cultivars of *Crococsmia*" under the name 'Achilles': "Tallest of the montbretias (sic), growing to more than 53 inches (1.4m). "Montbretias"? Don't be confused by this usage because on page 65 we already learned that the name "Montbretia" is "now a nomenclatural synonym of *Tritonia*". This new nomenclature is reinforced on page 99 with: "...the genus *Montbretia*, a genus now included in *Tritonia*...". O.K., so the authors mis-spoke. I doubt anyone will find many such "Aha!" moments in this fine book.

Co-author Dunlop is also hybridizer Dunlop whose name appears beside a number of the cultivar names as the hybridizer/originator. These include the hybrid 'Auriol', introduced in 2003 and no doubt named in honor of artist Auriol Batten whose marvelously detailed illustrations appear in this book.

Among the tiny delights this book holds is the discovery of insights into the relationships of these two genera. On page 47, we find that *Crococsmia* is not in the same lineage as *Chasmanthe*; instead it is immediately allied with *Freesia*.

On the other hand, again on page 47 we learn that, "*Chasmanthe*...fall(s) in a clade among genera...including *Dierama*, *Duthiestrum*, *Ixia*, *Sparaxis* and *Tritonia*." All these, with the exception of *Duthiestrum*, are genera well known to gardeners.

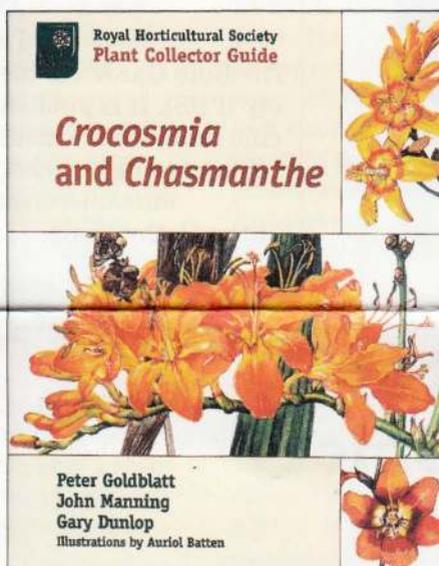
We learn, also, that good health is a feature both *Crococsmia* and *Chasmanthe* share. Red spider mites do attack when conditions are hot and dry, thrips can become a problem and the occasional virused plant is seen, but

these seem to be the only pests and diseases which the home gardener is likely to encounter. (Reviewer's tip: Try spraying water on the plant leaves daily for a few days to eliminate red spider mite – near dusk is good because the critters will die during the night's coolness. Also, destroy the occasional virused plant complete with all its bulbs and bulblets. Presto! You've all but eliminated the first and third health problems.)

Goldblatt's Introduction touches briefly on some of the difficulties encountered in writing this book: an original author as well as one of the original painters had to be replaced as they found it impossible to continue with the work; the difficulty in locating *Crococsmia masoniorum* in the wild (it is uncommon); and obtaining wild plants in flower of several of the *Crococsmia* species (for the purpose of painting them accurately).

These two genera come to life for the reader in *Crococsmia* and *Chasmanthe*. Both genera, their history and development, are more interesting than one might imagine; the fate of so many hard-working plants in our gardens is to be ignored while we nurse the delicate sickling. I recommend this book for the scientist as well as the gardener. Goldblatt, Manning and Dunlop have done excellent research and field study work so that, somehow, casual reading turns to interest and the reader is pulled right into the adventure of good science.

And as for those Batten illustrations, you almost feel like placing their stems in a vase of water.



CROCOSMIA AND CHASMANTHE - A Royal Horticultural Society Plant Collector Guide. By Peter Goldblatt, John Manning and Gary Dunlop with illustrations by Auriol Batten. 236 pp., 14 color plates, 1 b/w plate, 14 line drawings. Published by Timber Press, 1 (800) 327-5680 or www.timberpress.com. Copyright 2004. \$29.95.



Pacific Bulb Society

Gardening with Bulbs!

We're on the web!
www.pacificbulbsociety.org

The Pacific Bulb Society was formed in 2002 by co-founders Cathy Craig and Marguerite English. We serve all people interested in flowering bulbs. Our major member benefits are:

- International email forum
- PBS WIKI with color photos of bulbs
- Newsletter
- Local dinners with lectures, travelogues, and often bulb auctions
- PBS popular BX (Bulb & Seed Exchange)

MEMBERSHIP FORM is available at our website: find us at www.PacificBulbSociety.org and scroll down to "membership form".

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The Bulb Garden

The Bulb Garden is the newsletter of the Pacific Bulb Society (PBS). It is published quarterly and is available to Pacific Bulb Society members. This newsletter provides bulb & gardening articles, news of interest to members, and announcements of the PBS organization.

Editor: Cathy Craig

CathyCraigEA@hotmail.com

Newsletter of the Pacific Bulb Society



FIRST CLASS MAIL

