



**California Rare Fruit Growers – Central Coast Chapter**

**May 2018 Newsletter**

**by Lori Bright**

**Las Pilitas Nursery Carries Superior California Native Plants**



*CRFG Central Coast members shop for native plants after the meeting and tour. Photo by Joe Sabol.*

It was May 12th, the weather was perfect and the company couldn't have been better. Once arriving at the nursery we met one of the co-owners of the Las Pilitas Nursery. Penny Nyunt (previously Wilson) was our animated, enthusiastic and knowledgeable host. Penny was "raised-up" in the nursery business. Her father Bert Wilson and mother Celeste Wilson began the nursery in the 70's. Once the Internet was in existence Bert began to go techno and put an amazing amount of information out there for all. I encourage everyone to look at this site. It has everything! ([www.laspilitas.com](http://www.laspilitas.com))



*Penny wears the CRFG cap that Tucker has presented to her to say "thank you" on behalf of our Chapter. Photo by Joe Sabol.*



*Our animated and informative host shares a wealth of information about the native plants at Las Pilitas Nursery. Photo by Joe Sabol.*

Las Pilitas offers a plethora of plants not-the-least-of-which is a collection of 47 cultivars of Manzanita! With a nursery full of fabulous plants, it's not unheard of that some species might cross with one-other.....then VOILÀ, Las Pilitas serendipitously creates a brand new cultivar. Watch for [Penstemon 'Margarita BOP'](#), [Salvia 'Poza Blue'](#) and [Salvia 'Celestial Blue'](#). The philosophy at the nursery is one of "Survival of the Fittest". In other words- if a plant can handle harsh conditions and still look beautiful – It's a KEEPER.

Some of the plants Penny introduced us to were:

- [Salvia Spathacea](#), Humming Bird Sage: Easy groundcover for under Oak trees.
- [Sambucus caerulea](#), Native Elderberry: Make Elderberry wine, or cough syrup, but always cook the berries first.
- [Rhus ovata](#), Sugar Bush: Perfect for Screening out those nosey neighbors, and fast-growing to boot.

- [Ribes aureum var. gracillimum](#), 'Penny's golden Current': Easy to grow and tasty!
- [Ribes quercetorum](#) is a great bird habitat and makes great jellies and jams.
- [Aristolochia californica](#), 'California Dutchman's Pipe': A healthy and beautiful vigorous vine.
- [Satureja douglasii](#), Yerba Buena or Indian Mint is wonderful groundcover and fab for tea.
- [Eriogonum fasciculatum](#), California Buckwheat: Tough plant and will keep down weeds.
- [Trichostema lanatum](#), Woolly Blue Curls: BEAUTIFUL, almost orchid-like deep purple flowers.

Las Pilitas Nursery is open on both Fridays and Saturdays. These plants are a marvel to behold. Thanks so much Penny!!!



*Our group listens attentively as Penny tells the history of her family's business. Photo by Joe Sabol.*



*Penny takes the group on a tour of part of the grounds and tells the history of plants we see on the way. Photo by Joe Sabol.*

---

**Recently Updated in Website**

- [New "Plant Exchange" CRFG CCC Google Group](#)

Do you sometimes find yourself with too many vegetable plants and want to give some away? Or dig up a succulent but don't want to toss it in the green waste bin? Maybe you have been looking for a fig or apple tree and wonder if one of your CRFG Chapter compadres has one to spare?

Well, you're in luck because, in addition to our Scion Exchange and Rideshare email groups, we have a new group for exchanging plants!

You can use this new email group to:

- Offer your extra plants (except citrus) to others within SLO County.
- Request if anyone has a specific type of plant (except citrus) to give away from within SLO County.

You will need a Google email account to join the group. For more information about these groups, see the [FAQ page](#). You may want to wait for a few weeks for the group to populate with people before you post.

- The [Orchard History](#) page has been updated with photos from the [April 28, 2018 Orchard Maintenance Day](#).