

# American Fuchsia Society



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*Fuchsia Fantasy Photo*

American Fuchsia Society Bulletin

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## On The Cover

The beautiful photo on the cover was created by Past AFS President, Al Sydnor, using photo editing software to create this colorful fuchsia image. He entered the photo in the 2011 AFS Photo contest. Category F. Fuchsia Fantasy photo.

**Important Note: The American Fuchsia Society has a new Membership Secretary.** Karen Wilkerson, member of the Sebastopol Branch has volunteered to fill this position. Contact information is on page (2).

### 2024 AFS Photo Contest - Results.

The AFS board is sad to report that we did not receive any entries for our 2024 Photo Contest.

**NEW AFS website update:** In the October-December 2024 bulletin, page 6, I wrote a really nice AFS website update. However, I forgot to list the new AFS website address. Bulletin Editor. AFS website address: [americanfuchsiasociety.org](http://americanfuchsiasociety.org)

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### 2025 AFS Board Meeting Schedule

*When meetings are scheduled, board members will be notified. Most meetings are held at 10:00 am.*

*The next AFS Board Meeting is tentatively scheduled for*

February 8th, ZOOM  
Conference Call

April 12th, ZOOM  
Conference Call

## The History of the Fuchsia In America, Part I of a series

By Salli Dahl

This is the first of a series of small article excerpts from Salli Dahl's book, *Wildly Seeking*



Fuchsias. Chapter I. It Is Simply Not Known

when the first fuchsia arrived in America.

***"It is not known who brought the first fuchsia to the United States,"*** pronounced Alzada Mott in the National Fuchsia Society's magazine, *Fuchsian*, in 1950. And she was right. The first fuchsia in America will probably elude us—but the when and where of the first documented fuchsia occurred surprisingly early in U.S. history. It found its way to America perhaps before "America" was and certainly immediately thereafter.

'Wait a minute', one might think. 'Almost all fuchsia books include a section on history. Surely fuchsias in America are covered.' A sensible reasoning, but ... The

history of the fuchsia in Europe is easily found in books about fuchsias—a little muddled perhaps but enthusiastically attempted with what information was available at the time. Records that go back centuries were not always scrupulously kept, if kept at all, and sorting through what is available is difficult at best.

However, when it comes to the history of the fuchsia in America, all that one can find are vague hints, bits and pieces, wild guesses, or nothing at all. That is, until fuchsia societies formed. In between that time, it is almost a void. Fuchsias got here, period.

Consider who 'Americans' really were in the colonial and early days of the nation. They were European, Dutch, Swedish, French, Spanish, and predominately British. Those emigrants did not dump their love of flowers in the Atlantic on the long voyage here. They maintained their culture, their interests, their family ties, and especially, their communication with 'home'. After all, that is what the colonies were established for: the benefit of the mother country.



Her history is America's history.

Regarding the introduction of the fuchsia in Europe and the prevailing history in fuchsia books, research in England is ongoing. For several year, Past President of The British Fuchsia Society, Jim Muil, has been gathering and analyzing an extensive amount of primary material from horticultural research centers. Additionally, in 1998, John V. Porter of Southport, England, celebrated BFS's 60th year with *A History of The Fuchsia in Europe*, 1998. Porter used botanical publications, museum specimens, and botanical drawings as a primary sources. While Porter pointed out that there are still questions regarding fuchsia history, he applied the necessary effort to sort out what he had and presented some starling information.

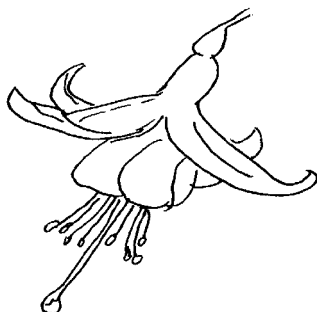
For the purpose of determining where America's history began, there are three important moments in Europe's history:

First is the European discovery of the fuchsia. ***For 150 years, it has been believed***

***that the first description of a fuchsia occurred in 1703 when Father Charles Plumier of France visited the West Indies and published 'Fuchsia triphylla flore coccinea' [F. triphylla].***

However, Porter pointed out that Plumier was not first at all! ***It was actually George Handisyd who first described fuchsia Thilco [F. magellanica] around 1689!*** His herbarium specimen, gathered in the "Straights of Magellan", and his description of that fuchsia are held by the Hans Sloane Herbarium in England.

Was this information about the first fuchsia, at any time in history, known here in America? Possibly. There was a colonial interest in horticulture and the avid interest in news from 'home' by British immigrants.\*



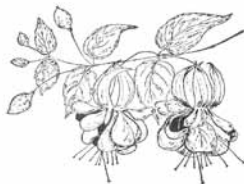
continued on page 6

## FUCHSIA POEM

*By Anne James*

*A novice fuchsia grower,  
I watch with inexperience eye  
Each leaf that grows, each bud that forms,  
Remove the grubs and aphid's swarms.  
Spray, fertilize and water right,  
Inspect each morning, noon and night.  
But the greatest joy without a doubt.  
Is to watch the newest flower come out  
I find the new bud, now all green  
This flower before I have not seen  
I watch the bud with expectation  
To pop it is a great temptation.  
But I resist and watch it grow  
Plumper and plumper, why so slow?  
Will the colours be just as the catalogue said?  
Will the tube and corolla be 'orangey'-red?  
Will the sepals recurve, is it double or single  
I can't remember, but oh the tingle.  
Of excitement as opening day draws near  
Today's the day, the time is here!  
As I reach to turn the basket round  
I know the flower, I've just found  
'Vanessa Jackson'- falls to the ground.*

*From 'Journal of the Australian Fuchsia Society' of January 2006*



## What's in a Fuchsia Name

*Madalyn Drago*

Additional Comments from Ted Spacks article in the October-December 2024 bulletin.



Glen Storvick, an early member and hybridizer of the Pacifica Branch, as well as the San Fran-

cisco and San Bruno Branches told me what he named his fuchsias and why. When his vision failed, I would give him a ride to the meetings, and we would often talk about his hybrids. Also, as he was a carpenter, he built my first lath house.

He started hybridizing in 1975 and always felt a one-word name was best. 'Dot-tie' and 'Dodie' were his first hybrids named after his wife (who died in 1991). His most popular hybrids were 'Dimples' (1981) and 'Cinnamon' (1983). 'Cinnamon', 'Inferno', 'Cricket' and 'Chloe' are in the orange spectrum that reflects his interest in the illusive yellow fuchsia. His last

fuchsia hybrid was in 1994 before he died of cancer. It was 'Maddy', a large red and white double trailer named after me (my nickname) with unusual "cork-screw" sepals because of my wavy hair. I have one other fuchsia hybrid name after me called 'Madalyn Drago' a pink and purple single hybridized in The Netherlands. Unfortunately, Glen never lived to see me become President of the American Fuchsia Society.\*

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## Our Breathing Plants

By Elizabeth Devore

We all know that plants provide us with constant supplies of breathable oxygen, but we tend to forget that plants themselves need oxygen. Since the oxygen they produce is used by us and the animal world, it is natural to wonder who or what supplies the oxygen for the plants. Plants need day and night oxygen, just as we do. However, ***every green leaf is a natural oxygen manufacturing factory.*** The work goes on during daylight hours and the oxygen, you might say, is produced by accident. The greenery is busy using sunlight to convert molecules of water and carbon dioxide into simple sugar, the basic food of all plant life. The process, of course, is photosynthesis—the sunbeam recipe. Scientists are beginning to understand some of the complicated processes of photosynthesis, and some day we hope to copy Nature’s sunshine recipe. The energy of sunlight is used to rearrange simple atoms and molecules into molecules. It is a complicated chemical process. As

the sugar molecules are assembled, a number of oxygen molecules are left over. To the plants, they become a waste product and are returned to the air.

On a sunny day, a green forest pours countless tons of this by product, oxygen, into the air.

There is enough to supply all the people and every breathing animal on the earth. There is also enough for the plants themselves. For they need oxygen to carry on the chemical activities of their living cells.

A plant, however, has no nose and no lungs to carry on our kind of breathing. The ordinary gases of the air enter through surface pores called “stomata” and seep out again through the same small doorways. Once inside the plant, the air seeps leisurely from cell to cell. Each cell grabs from the mixture a molecule or two of the gas it happens to need at the moment.

About one-fifth of normal air is oxygen and each living plant cell takes oxygen molecules day and night. The chemical process that uses oxygen produces carbon





dioxide as a waste gas, just as we do. These waste molecules circulate around until they eventually reach the surface stomata. They ooze through the pores and mingle with the air outdoors.

Plants add small amounts of carbon dioxide to the air in the process of respiration. They add tons and tons of oxygen as a by-product of their photosynthesis. They do not put out enough carbon dioxide to supply their photosynthesis activity, but ***they do put out enough fresh, breathable oxygen to supply our needs and the needs of animals,*** and plenty more to supply their own needs.

The waste gas we breathe out supplies the plant world with extra carbon dioxide. This waste gas from the human, animal, and plant world adds less than one per cent to the gaseous mixture of the air. The generous plant world contributes twenty-one per cent of oxygen present in the air mixture. Plants give out carbon dioxide during the day and night and surplus oxygen during the day. For this reason, a thoughtful nurse

removes green plants from a sick room after dark. Without light, plants compete with us for the oxygen in the air.\*

*From: The National Fuchsia Society,  
The Fuchsia Fan of October 1967*

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## What is a Hybrid?

*By Michel Tremblay  
From Houseplant Forum*

A hybrid is the result of a cross between parents of different genera, species, or varieties.

Hybrids that result from crosses between two different genera are called intergeneric hybrids. Intergeneric crosses are quite rare and can only occur with plants of the same family. Within the gesneriad family, for example, the result of a cross between the genus *Gloxinia* and the genus *Kohleria* would form an intergeneric hybrid and would go by the name x *Glokohleria* (the 'x' indicates an intergeneric hybrid). Most intergeneric crosses are quite different from either parent and can be used to develop entirely new races of plants as long as they aren't sterile. Unfortunately, this is often the case.

A hybrid can also result

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## What is a Hybrid?

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from a cross between two parent plants of the same genus which belong to different species, such as *Saintpaulia ionantha* crossed with *Saintpaulia grandiflora*. This sort of cross is often used to introduce a new line of genes (characteristics) into a species. ***Most interspecific hybrids are stronger and more resistant than either parent, a phenomenon known as hybrid vigour.***

Finally, there are also hybrids which result from a cross between different varieties or cultivars of the same species (an intraspecific hybrid). These are the most common hybrids. For example, two difficult cultivars of African violet (*Saintpaulia ionantha*) can be crossed, such as S. I. 'Marta' crossed with S. I. 'Prince Rouge'.

When one of the parents in a cross is itself a hybrid, the end result is a series of plants, none of which is exactly identical. That's because, although the genes of a non-hybrid plant are basically identical and are therefore passed on in equal proportions to all its

offspring, the hybrid parent has inherited a mixture of different genes from its two parents and will pass along different combinations of these to its children. Even though some of the offspring may look similar, upon closer inspection, several differences will be noted.

***Because of hybridizing and selection, many can work on creating entirely new plants with qualities far superior to those that already exist.\****

*From: B. C. Fuchsia and Begonia Society The Eardrop of August 2022*



**"All my hurts  
My garden spade  
can heal."**

RALPH WALDO  
EMERSON (1803 1882),

"Of all human activities, apart from the procreation of children, gardening is the most optimistic and hopeful. The gardener is by definition one who plans for and believes and trusts in a future, whether in the short or the longer term."



## February Checklist

Chuck Hassett

Prune After Last Frost. February is an important time of year for the pruning of fuchsias. Many branches of the American Fuchsia Society will hold pruning workshops for members during the month. As a general rule, wait until after the normal date of the last frost, or shelter your plants on frosty nights to prevent damage to the new shoots which emerge after pruning. The job may be done immediately in heated greenhouses and in regions which have a Mediterranean or sub-tropical climate such as Los Angeles. In the Pacific Northwest and in the Southeast it is wise to delay pruning until March because of the risks of late winter cold snaps. ***When the time comes, do a thorough job. Pruning restores much of the youthful vigor and beauty of a fuchsia. Its effect is beneficial and refreshing.***

Re-pot Rootbound Plants. Last year's containerized fuchsias which have wintered over successfully will benefit from being repotted with fresh soil. It is usually convenient to do this in

conjunction with pruning or soon after pruning. If you wait much longer, new shoots will emerge which may be damaged during the repotting operation.

In most cases a third of the root ball can be cut away before the plant is repotted in a container of the same or smaller size. If the plant is especially vigorous you may want to cut the root ball back a little further. After new soil is added to the original level, water the fuchsia thoroughly with a vitamin B-1 solution to soften the shock.

Remove Mulch and Fertilize. When the danger of frost is past, remove mulching materials from fuchsias in the ground to permit the welcome sunrays to warm the earth. If you applied organic mulches last fall, such as nitrolized sawdust, you may want to work it lightly into the topsoil around the plants to enrich the humus content.

Winter rains have leached nutrients from your soil, especially nitrogen. A complete water-soluble fertilizer which is high in nitrogen, applied

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## February Checklist

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half strength, will get your plants off to a good start in the new growing season. Increase the applications to full strength as soon as they show good foliage development.

**Take Spring Cuttings.** If spring comes early in your region or you own a greenhouse, look for soft green tips on your favorite fuchsias. Cuttings from trailing varieties rooted now can be grown into full hanging baskets by August or September under good growing conditions.

Start some new plants for friends, neighbors, or a summer fuchsia sale. This may also be an excellent time to start a tall standard from cuttings of 'Swingtime', 'Carnival' or 'Golden Anniversary'. Leave the tips of the cuttings un-pinched and grow them to full height this year. Next year, after careful winter protection, they will develop full heads and beautiful displays of contrasting colors.

**Check Your Supplies.** Be ready for those warm days of spring and late winter which will draw you irresistibly into the garden. Are you pruning

shears clean and sharp? You'll need trash bags or boxes to collect the pruning's and raking's.

Don't neglect fertilizing for lack of an appropriate kind. Visit your garden supply center early in the season if you have run out of nitrogen fertilizer. Water soluble types work well in cool weather. On the other hand, blood meal and bone meal need a warm temperature (65 deg F) and microbial activity to break them down to a form which plants can absorb.

Make certain there are enough clean containers of the right sizes for potting up or repotting that needs to be done. Have potting mix on hand or mix your own from sterile ingredients.\*

### *Cutting Example*

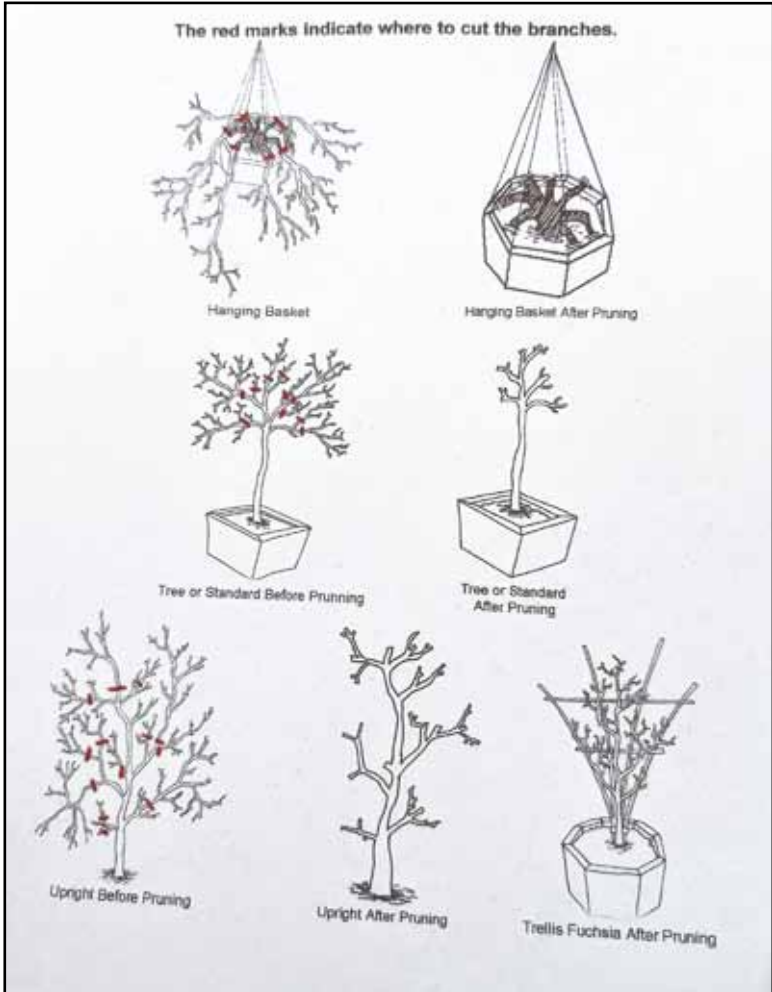


## DID YOU KNOW?

There are at least four fuchsias that primarily bloom early spring. The best time to prune them is late summer.

***F. paniculata* *F. arborescens* 'Fanfare' 'First Success'**

In our garden 'Fanfare' will lose its leaves in the August when its hot. When the temperatures go back to normal in the fall we prune as necessary, to reshape etc.



## Branch Directory

Crescent City: 3rd Wednesday,  
Potluck at 6:00 p.m. before every meeting, Del  
Norte County Fairgrounds Dining Room, Hwy 1,  
Crescent City, CA. Mailing Address:  
Crescent City, Fuchsia Society  
1730 S Bethesda Way  
Crescent City, CA 95531  
(562) 533-4810  
<delfiedanner@yahoo.com>

Sacramento: Location, Days & Times. change  
Contact (916) 207-1428  
<Jose@JoseRodriguezHomes.com>

Salem Area: 2nd Tuesday, 1:30 p.m.  
13th St. Nursury  
1298 13th St. SE, Salem, OR. 97302  
Mailing address: 4543 Brock Loops ,  
Salem, OR 97302 (503) 584-1786  
<knighten\_g@yahoo.com>

San Mateo: First Sat, every other month, 10:00 a.m.  
Presbyterian Church, 1500 Easton dr.  
Burlingame, CA (650) 875-1938  
<oscarcolin@sbcglobal.net>

Santa Clara Valley: 1st Tuesday, 7:30 p.m.  
323 Pine Lane A-302,  
Los Altos, CA 94022 (650) 793-7447  
<egspack@yahoo.com>

Sebastopol: 4th Friday, 11:00 a.m.  
(Potlucks TBA)  
Wischemann Hall.,  
465 Morris St, Sebastopol, CA  
locations occasionally change,  
contact (707) 838-9429 for location  
<berrylight80@yahoo.com>

## Affiliated Society

Eugene Fuchsia & Begonia Society  
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If there is a problem,  
contact AFS President



## 2025 Branch Programs

Note: No 2025 Branch Program information were received by the time this edition went to print.

### Did you Know?

*The American Fuchsia Society has No office building, No Offices, No paid employees. AFS Board members are all volunteers, working from home, and in most cases, using our own computers, printers and officer supplies. We also travel at our own expense, gas, food, hotels etc. Your American Fuchsia Society membership pays for printing & postage to mail the quarterly bulletin. We also pay the cost of renting a location when we hold a function like an annual meeting & pay a guest speaker fee. We also carry AFS Liability Insurance in case someone that is not an AFS member gets hurt at an AFS function or activity.*

### Mark your Calendar - Special Events

#### WANT MORE FUCHSIA CULTURE INFORMATION?

Contact AFS Fuchsia Consultant  
Janis Bergquist by e-mail or phone.  
Contact info is on page 2 of every AFS Bulletin.

***AFS has a Facebook page.*** Within Facebook search American Fuchsia Society. AFS members can post branch activities, photos, plant sales etc. The Sebastopol Branch also has a Facebook page called Sebastopol Fuchsia Friends.

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Send to Membership Secretary: New Member ☐ Renewal ☐

**Karen Wilkinson, 119 Alden Ave  
Rohnert Park, CA 94928**

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