

Southern California Bamboo

The Newsletter of the Southern California Chapter of the American Bamboo Society

A California 501(c)-3 non-profit educational corporation, incorporated July 22, 1991

Chapter website: www.ABSSoCal.org

**ABS SoCal Activities / Events planned: (Monthly meetings are usually on the third Saturday of month.)
(Changes will be noted below.)**

Date:	Time:	Activity / Event:
Sat. Jan. 21, 2006	10:00 am	Member's meeting in Quail's Larabee house to formulate plans for year's activities.
Sat. Feb. 18, 2006	10:00 am	
Sat. Mar. 18, 2006	10:00 am	
Sat. Apr. 15, 2006		Annual ABS SoCal Spring Bamboo Sale

Unscheduled days of bamboo collection maintenance are often held at Quail Botanical Gardens, Encinitas, CA, on some Saturdays, 10:00 to 3:00. Workers generally meet in front of the Gift Shop and then move to the activity areas. If you meet no one by the Gift Shop, check in reference collection. Contact Bob Dimattia for guidance: 760-519-0397. Bring your own lunch, drinks (non alcoholic, that is!) and have a great 'hands-on' time.

Agenda for Board Mtg, Sat. Jan. 21, 2006

1. Reports
 - a. Liaison with QBG
Reference collection
Propagation Greenhouse
 - b. Treasurer: Roy W.
2. Old Business
 - a. New Quarantine greenhouse:
 - b. Fill vacated director's position:
 - c. Future sale plant limits:
 - d. Chapter website:
 - e. April Sale
3. New Business
 - a. Annual calendar
 - b. Importing plants
 - c. ABS Hawaii convention
 - d. Membership
 - e. Public relations
 - f. Other
4. Adjourn

Short News Box

1. Roy Wiersma saw the *Dendrocalamus strictus* in flower at the LA Arboretum in October, 2005. He found that seeds were present in some of the flower/seed balls.
2. Theo Smith saw *Dendrocalamus minor* in flower at Quail Botanical Gardens in December, 2005 and then soon discovered his 15 gal container of it is also in flower.
3. Theo Smith discovered a variegated branchlet in his clump of *Chusquea pittieri* (see photo elsewhere in this issue).
4. Theo Smith has a *Phyllostachys viridis* 'Robert Young' which sent up unusual shoots this past year that were mostly green with yellow sulcus like that of *Phyllostachys viridis* "Houzeau"
5. Roy Wiersma discovered a variegated branchlet in his clump of *Bambusa oldhami* in the Fall of 2005 (see photo elsewhere in this issue).

All Chapter members are invited and encouraged to attend the planning meeting Sat. Jan 21, at 10:00 am in the Larabee house at Quail. We look forward to seeing you again!!

Southern California Bamboo

American Bamboo Society Southern California Chapter Officers:

Director, President	Michael A. Mullert to '06	619-465-4690	Mamullert@yahoo.com
Director, Vice President	Christian Lydick to '07	760-352-7095	CLydick@ivnet.org
Director, Treasurer	Roy Wiersma to '08	909-980-1740	Rhwiersma@aol.com
Alternate Director, Secretary	Pierre A. Domercq to '06	760-525-2260 (c)	PierreLaw@gmail.com
Director	Don Binnix to '07	714-531-2710	Dbinnix@msn.com
Director	Bob Dimattia to '06	760-519-0397 (c)	Bamboobob@cox.net
Alternate Director	Carl Rowland to '06	619-303-9802	CarlRowland1@cox.net
Chapter rep. to ABS National	JoAnne Wyman to '07	760-749-5716	Bamboo4u@netzero.net
Newsletter Editor, Membership	Theo Smith	951-359-1706	Trsmith00@sbcglobal.net

Fargesia nitida flowers!

By Jos van der Palen
(Translated from Dutch by Roy Wiersma)

One of the best known bamboos is *Fargesia nitida*. This is an elegant evergreen plant that in contrast to diverse other bamboos does not invade. An excellent choice for the garden you should think. But *Fargesia nitida* goes flowering on a large scale. And after flowering it goes dead. What now?

How frequently and when does a bamboo flower?

All the non-invasive winterhardy bamboos belong to *Fargesia*. This flowering in cycles varies from 80 to 120 years or more. The best known type, *Fargesia murieliae*, was collected as a single plant in 1907 by the well-known plant hunter Ernest Wilson. Between 1990 and 2000, spread over 10 years, the multiplications of this bamboo in all gardens of Europe and the U.S. started flowering. After flowering, the plants always died off. With like result: many bare spots in our gardens. In the same period, *Fargesia murieliae* also had flowered everywhere in homeland China. With like consequence: famine with the pandas. The next flowering of the new generation seedlings will be expected in scarcely over 100 years. Of *Fargesia nitida* it is known that (almost) all known types came into existence from seeds that were collected by the plant hunter Berezovski in South-Gansu in China during one flowering period in 1886. Now, almost 120 years later, *Fargesia nitida* is again on the turn to go flowering and seed-forming for a new generation that again scarcely over 120 years shall go flowering.

Why does it go dead afterwards?

Fargesias form no underground runners. With flower and seed-forming, the reserve nourishment in the short rhizomes is quickly used up and there is no extra energy stored to make new shoots. Therefore, they die and after the flowering the mother plants make efficient room for the new generation seedlings. Running types can well survive the flowering. This type stores reserve nourishment in the long rhizomes. By cutting back again and again, the plant makes new culms that eventually can live longer.

Can you still do "something" if you discover that the *Fargesia nitida* in your garden begins to flower?

Pruning back of flowering *Fargesias* doesn't help. This we learned a few years back of the flowering by *Fargesia murieliae*. Also, *Fargesia nitida* forms small grassy spikelets, and after that seed, and dies of it. This seed can again be sown and the plants that originate from this have yet a life of 120 years for themselves. Try to go further with the strongest seedlings.

Why do all the examples of a type flower together? Is this how this happens in nature in China also?

The same-time flowering of bamboos is one of the least understood phenomena of the plant world. Probably each bamboo species has a built in clock that everywhere at the same time starts the flowering. A number of new *Fargesia nitidas* collected in the wild in China are this year flowering in my garden and thus also in China flowering. This bamboo covers large areas there and is for many pandas the chief food. The coming years we surely again are going to hear stories about food shortage.

Are there "varieties" of *Fargesia nitida* that will still go for a while and that you can move into your garden with confidence?

Unfortunately, all varieties inclusive of well known *Fargesia nitida* 'Anceps', 'Eisenach' and 'Nymphenburg' shall go flowering. Probably there are over 5 to 10 years still but there will be few non-flowering examples of these varieties left over. It is in each case advisable to not procure these bamboos anymore. *Fargesia nitida* 'Nanping' falls outside this group because in the meantime it became obvious that this bamboo doesn't belong with *Fargesia nitida*. This type received provisionally the name *Fargesia* sp. 'Nanping'. Between 1990 and 2000, a similar bamboo species, *Fargesia murieliae*, flowered. Are there no suitable existing seedlings available that again go flowering nearly over a hundred years from now? These are the most important obtainable selections: 'Jumbo' and 'Bimbo'. When these varieties are obtained from reliable nurserymen people have more certainty of species' authenticity. *Fargesia murieliae* belongs to the most winterhardy bamboos and the leaf has a bright green color. The variety 'Jumbo' is a selection with relatively small leaves and becomes 3 meters tall with room. 'Jumbo' ranks its best in a place of half shade but endures in moisture retaining soil and also some sun. A good type for wintergreen hedges in half shade. 'Bimbo' is a newer selection out of Denmark with fine leaves and an upright growth habit. This smallest non-invasive bamboo becomes not higher than 1 to 1.5 meters. Many nurseries offer newer vigorous but fewer tested out selections. There are too many to name here. But unfortunately there emerge still continually flowering plants from the "old generation" supplied with the "new generation" name. In the Netherlands and Belgium that is mostly *Fargesia murieliae* 'Kranich' but also other improvised names are used. There are probably plants tissue-culture multiplied from 1991 of the old generation of which people thought that they were from the new generation. Through the use of growth hormones the date of flowering of this old generation is delayed to this day. The actual flower-safe new generation is represented by *Fargesia murieliae* 'Bimbo', 'Jumbo', 'Simba' and many other new selections. According to this theory all the now still-flowering plants belong to the old generation. *Fargesia denudata* 'Lancaster' also represents a flower-safe new generation. This elegant somewhat overhanging bamboo resembles *Fargesia murieliae* but has shiny leaves and overhanging branches. This type was not so long in the past brought as a seedling by Roy Lancaster out of China. *Fargesia denudata* 'Lancaster' becomes to 3 meters tall and is very winterhardy. *Fargesia denudata* 'Xian 1' and 'Xian 2' are in all probability seedlings also. *Fargesia dracocephala* is also a new generation. Of two other important non-invasive types, *Fargesia robusta* and *Fargesia Rufa* we only know from communication that they not so long ago have flowered in China. Thus we hope for these types but that the news is right.

Which bamboo is the best choice as a substitute for *Fargesia nitida*?

It is without a doubt at this moment *Fargesia* sp. Jiuzhaigou 1; in the trade also well known as *Fargesia* sp. 'Jiu' or named "Red bamboo." This bamboo should not go flowering the first 80 to 100 years because the mother plant not so long ago was collected as a seedling. Similarities to *Fargesia nitida* are many. With both bamboos the thin leaves roll with frost, sun, and dry up. Also, the great winterhardiness (to -25 degrees C) is comparable. An important difference forms with the culm leaves of the culms. With *Fargesia nitida* they stay sometimes years and give the plant in duration a somewhat untidy and reedlike appearance. But with this *Fargesia* all the culm leaves fall off the new culms inside of a year. By this the colorful stems are freed. Recently by way of a comparative DNA investigation it has been found that *Fargesia* sp. Jiuzhaigou is very related to *Fargesia nitida* but probably is a new still undescribed species.

continued page 5

Curious growing

Culms in my small grove of *Phyllostachys vivax* sometimes grow close to the property wall right under the power lines. Each year I try to top the new ones before they reach the lines. Sometimes the topped ones continue to grow by branching. Sometimes the topped culm will turn brown and die after several months. Then I cut them out. This year I saw a brown culm and cut it out but discovered the following: It was brown only on one side, the side away from two small branches of leaves at the 18th and 20th nodes 18 ft up. The small branches are shown on immediate right and the total culm is shown on far right. The culm had appeared in '99 and had been cut off just above the 20th node. (Large culms in my groves are often marked with the year they arise.) The culm had remained alive but slowly died on the side that did not have any branches on it. My curiosity asks: Does this mean that the nourishment of a culm travels only straight up the side to the branches directly above it? - Theo S.



New culms of *Dendrocalamus strictus* showing very tight clumping habit and new drying culm sheaths.



Gigantochloa atroviolacea showing new green culm (left) and older black culm with faint green stripes (center)

Bamboo

Headquarters.com

Features:

- Specimens
- Giant Timber
- Ground Cover
- Large Clumpers
- Erosion Control
- Hedges / Screening
- Over 250 Species

Visit our website for complete details and NEW online store:
www.BambooHeadquarters.com
 Vista, CA (866) 293-2925

Rhizome Barrier
(Cut and shipped to your request)



Ken's Clumping Bamboos



Rare Species
Wholesale Prices
Local Deliveries Available

Phone / Fax: 909-590-2297

(no e-mail)

3866 Pilgrims Way
Chino, CA 91710

A.B.S. Member Grower



Variegated branchlet of *Bambusa oldhamii*



Regular branchlet of *Bambusa oldhamii*



Variegated branchlet of *Chusquea pittieri*



Roy Wiersma's *Bambusa vulgaris* "Wamin"



New culm of *Dendrocalamus jianshuiensis* showing soft white "fuzz" covering internodes

Fargesia nitida flowers! (cont.)

The color

The frequently used name "Red bamboo" is some concern of misunderstanding because *Fargesia* sp. Jiuzhaigou 1 does not have this color the whole year. With this bamboo the culms color to intense red in the spring sun. During the course of the summer this color goes to more orange-yellow and in the latter part of the summer it forms the new deep green culms in between. The bamboo's typical red coloration is strongest in the sun in the months of March, April, and May.

Growth Habit

Fargesia sp. Jiuzhaigou 1 belongs just as *Fargesia nitida* to the non-invasive bamboos. Every year mostly in the latter summer, the new culms which have barely or no branches form right by the plant. By this the bamboo becomes slowly wider. The growth is upright with somewhat overhanging tops. Older culms can sometimes hang through farther. But because the plant in November is in winter preparation some leaves drop off and thus the winter silhouette is always stiffly upright. This bamboo is a good choice for a hedge plant with a height of 2 to 3 meters. In humus rich not dried out ground *Fargesia* sp. 'Jiu' endures the sun well.

New Selections

The new selection *Fargesia* sp. Jiuzhaigou 'Genf' with room becomes 4 meters high and colors in the spring to intense red. With *Fargesia* sp. Jiuzhaigou 'Willumeit 4' the culms color to about black and become between 2 and 3 meters high. *Fargesia* sp. Jiuzhaigou 'Willumeit 8' stays lower and colors to red and has a very graceful leaf. *Fargesia* sp. Jiuzhaigou 'Willumeit 9' becomes certainly as tall. The thicker somewhat

hanging through culms can color from red to dark purple. This possibly is a replacement for *Fargesia nitida* 'Nymphenburg'. There are also already seedlings of *Fargesia nitida* but it is important to really learn the qualities in a longer trial period. Over 10 years when these seedlings are matured we can choose out the large variation in height, growth habit, and color.

Bamboos look very much like each other. How do you know that you buy the exact plant?

For someone who doesn't associate daily with bamboo it is almost impossible to differentiate a potted flower-safe *Fargesia* sp. 'Jiu' from a potted flower-dangerous *Fargesia nitida*. It is always best with purchasing a bamboo to visit a specialized nursery or ask of a "no flower guarantee." Or look on the Internet under *Fargesia* sp. Jiuzhaigou. In any case you can examine the plant for flowering. If you find a grassy spikelet of thickened red coloration on the end of the branches, then flowering has begun.

Are there still other bamboo species that maybe in a very short time will go flowering and that you are better off not placing in your garden?

Outside the old generation of *Fargesia murielae* that still as a new generation is emerging, there are no important bamboos of which we know that before long will go flowering.

Reference

Bamboo- Tijdschrift van de European Bamboo Society, afdeling Nederland. Jaargang 15, Nummer 2, Zomer 2005, p.10-13.

Inauguration of the National Bamboo Collection of Mexico

The first phase in the conservation of native bamboo is a reality in Mexico. The project developed from a BOTA grant to Dr. Teresa Mejia, her colleagues, students and garden staff at the Ecology Institute, A.C. (INECOL), the associated Francisco Xavier Clavijero Botanical Garden and Biologist Gilberto Cortés of the Technological Institute of Chetumal. The collection of living and herbarium vouchers grew over two years of field activities by bamboo taxonomist, Gilberto Cortés and several students. Without their direction the living plants and herbarium specimens returned to the institute would never have been on display for inauguration day.

On November 17, 2005 in Xalapa, Veracruz, the national bamboo collection was declared officially opened by INECOL's Director, Dr. Miguel Equihua, BOTA Director, Gib Cooper and Project Director, Dr. Teresa Mejia. Staff and guests participated in the one-day celebration. Inauguration activities included statements by representatives of INECOL and BOTA, followed by presentations about bamboo conservation and departmental reports concerning related bamboo research.

Project funds came from donations by individuals and the American Bamboo Society chapters in the USA and were raised over a yearlong period by Bamboo of the Americas (BOTA) director, Gib Cooper. On display were forty-seven plantings represented by 26 species of native Mexican bamboo. It was a fine sight realized by several years of intense work by all the participants accented by the first new culms of *Chusquea* and *Rhipidocladum* species arching overhead.

By Gib Cooper, Director Bamboo of the Americas (BOTA) December 18, 2005

--

Gib Cooper, Director Bamboo of the Americas (BOTA) 28446 Hunter Creek Loop Gold Beach, OR 97444 Tel. & FAX: 541-247-0835 BAMBOO CONSERVATION ACTION FOR THE NEW WORLD <http://www.bambooofttheamericas.org>

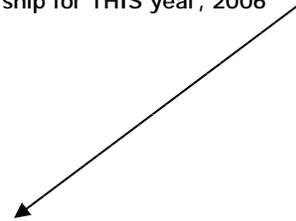
BOTA is administered by The American Bamboo Society (ABS) and is a California non-profit scientific and literary charitable corporation, tax-exempt under section 501(C)-3. Contributions to this project are tax-deductible under federal and California laws. For more information about ABS visit: <http://www.americanbamboo.org/>

The Southern California Chapter of the American Bamboo Society, Inc.
P. O. Box 230181
Encinitas, CA 92023-0181



If date is 2005 or less, time to renew membership for THIS year, 2006

Address correction requested



[Dotted rectangular box for address correction]

Application for membership in the American Bamboo Society and The Southern California Chapter of the American Bamboo Society

Renewal New

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _(____)_____ Fax: _(____)_____ e-mail: _____

- Membership for 2006 is (check one)
- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Annual: \$40 - ABS and ABS SoCal Chapter | <input type="checkbox"/> Annual: \$15 - ABS SoCal ONLY |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lifetime: \$600 - ABS Membership only | <input type="checkbox"/> Supporting: \$60 - ABS and ABS SoCal Chapter |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lifetime: \$300 - ABS SoCal Chapter only | <input type="checkbox"/> Patron: \$120 - ABS and ABS SoCal Chapter |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> \$15/year for each additional Chapter checked below: |

- Florida Caribbean; Hawaii; Louisiana-Gulf Coast; Mid-States; Northeast; Northern California;
 Oregon Bamboo Assoc.; Pacific Northwest; Southeast; Texas Bamboo Society; Tierra Seca

Make check to ABS-SoCal: Mail to: ABS SoCal Membership, P. O. Box 230181, Encinitas, CA 92023-0181

Check here only if you do NOT want your phone number and e-mail address listed in directories.

Note: Newsletter is available in .pdf format at the ABS SoCal website: www.abssocal.org - IN COLOR!