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Gardener's Notebook

Volume 24, No. 2

News, Advice & Special Offers for Bay Area Gardeners

May/June 2010



Hosta



Coreopsis



Clematis

INSIDE: Our Spring 2010 Plant Picks, Succulent Care, Plant it up, Edibles!

Visit our stores: Nine Locations in San Francisco, Marin and Contra Costa

Richmond District
3rd Avenue between
Geary & Clement
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46th & Sloat Blvd.
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9 to 6:30

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Visit us on the web: www.sloatgardens.com



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We'll help you grow the plants you love!

Don't Forget Mother's Day (May 9th)
& Father's Day (June 20th). Stop by Sloat
Garden Center for great gift ideas!

8 SLOAT NOTEBOOK May/June 2010

May & June Gardening Guide

MAY

Plant

- ☞ Plant annuals like petunias, marigolds, begonias, lobelia, and coleus. Re-seed radishes, carrots and beets.
- ☞ Plant late summer edibles like pumpkins, squash, sunflowers and melons.
- ☞ Select garden-ready blooming perennials.

Fertilize

- ☞ Fertilize rhododendrons, azaleas and camellias with **E.B. Stone Organics Azalea, Camellia & Gardenia Food**.
- ☞ Give vegetables a boost with **E.B. Stone Organics Tomato and Vegetable Food**.

- ☞ Use a time-release fertilizer such as **Osmocote** for your container plants.



Prune/Maintain

- ☞ Prune spring-flowering shrubs after bloom is past.
- ☞ Mulch vegetable and flower beds with **Sloat Forest Mulch Plus** to control weeds and conserve moisture.
- ☞ Freshen up containers and replace spent annuals with colorful 4-inch perennials such as verbena, calibrachoa, bacopa and ipomoea.
- ☞ Release ladybugs and other beneficial insects to help control aphids, mites, whiteflies, and other garden pests.

JUNE

Plant

- ☞ Warm season annuals are here! Plant zinnia, salvias, cosmos, lisianthus, portulaca.
- ☞ Plant herbs for use in the kitchen. Re-seed greens, cabbages and kales.



Fertilize

- ☞ Your spring plantings are probably getting hungry. Feed with all-purpose fertilizers such as **E.B. Stone Organics** and **Maxsea**.
- ☞ Feed your lawn with high nitrogen fertilizer like **Nature's Green Lawn Food**.

Prune/Maintain

- ☞ Continue to deadhead roses, shrubs and other flowers with a new pair of **Felco pruners** to encourage new blooms.
- ☞ Mulch shrubs and beds to conserve moisture. Try **GreenAll Microbark** for its beauty and utility.
- ☞ Make sure vegetables are supported with cages, stakes, or trellises.
- ☞ Check early-bearing fruit trees for heavily laden branches. Thin fruits now to prevent branches from breaking. Harvest vegetables to keep them producing.



Best Tasting Edibles

It’s fun and easy to plant delicious edibles like **strawberries** and **lettuce**, but don't forget easy-to-grow favorites such as **blueberries** and **raspberries** -- they will produce a bounty of fruit all season. Or give fruit trees a try. Once established, fruit trees have a long life and will reward you with your own backyard organic fruits. **Pomegranates**, **figs**, **stone fruits** and **citrus** can work well in containers on a patio. Whatever you plant, start planting now so that harvest time is in your future. Our edible planting chart is below...



WHEN TO PLANT FRUITS, HERBS & VEGETABLES

Blueberries	Year Round	Carrots	Year Round
Corn	April & May	Chard	Year Round
Cucumbers	Early May	Herbs	Year Round
Eggplant	April & May	Kale	Year Round
Figs	Year Round	Lettuces	Year Round
Grapes	Year Round	Radishes	Year Round
Peppers	April & May		
Pumpkins	April, May, June		
Strawberries	Feb – June		
Summer Squash	April – July		
Watermelon	April, May, June		



Penne Ziti Rigate with Garden Fresh Peas & Herbs

(by Annapet Santos)

- 1 lb. penne ziti rigate, cooked according to package directions (reserving one (1) cup of the pasta cooking water)
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 4 ounces finely diced pancetta
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 cup fresh peas



Blueberry Buttermilk Pancakes

Please, we beg you...give this recipe a whirl after your blueberries produce their fruit. They are the tastiest pancakes EVER.

- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- 3 tablespoons white sugar
- 3 teaspoons baking powder
- 1 1/2 teaspoons baking soda
- 3/4 teaspoon salt
- 3 cups buttermilk
- 1/2 cup milk
- 3 eggs
- 1/3 cup butter, melted
- 1/2 cup blueberries from your own blueberry bush

Read the full recipes at www.sloatgardens.com

Read the **Kitchen Gardener** for edible gardening tips & recipes!

SLOAT GARDEN CENTER SEMINARS

Each season we select local gardening experts and designers, as well as our knowledgeable senior staff, to speak in our seminar series. The class fee is \$5 (Gardener's Reward Program members attend for free) and all participants receive a 10% off coupon for redemption at any of our locations. Please call ahead to the seminar location to reserve a seat. Attendance is limited.

Grow Your Own Food Seminar Series



The ABC's of Herbs

Experts Kathleen Putnam and Rose Deming share their favorite recipes using basic herbs.
May 8—Danville, Sat., 10 am, Deming
May 19—S.F. (Sloat Bl.), Wed., 6:30 pm, Putnam

Peppers!

Our own peppahead Larry Noggle shares his favorite sauces, powders and rubs.
May 16—Mill Valley (Miller Ave.), Sun., 10 am

Pickles!

Nate Cofer and Terri Hiatt share easy recipes for making pickles and chutney.
June 9—S.F. (Sloat Blvd), Wed., 6:30 pm, Cofer
June 12—Danville, Sat., 10 am, Hiatt

The XYZ's of Herbs

Kathleen Putnam, chef and gardener, shows how to use less common herbs.
July 14—S.F. (Sloat Blvd.), Wed., 6:30 pm

Fall Veggies 101

Dave Phelps shows which veggies will feed you during the fall and winter.
Aug. 8—Mill Valley (Miller Ave.), Sun., 10 am
Aug. 22—Kentfield, Sun., 10 am

101 Beginning Gardener Seminar Series

Backyard Chickens 101

Mary Te Selle discusses chicken keeping fun.
May 2—Mill Valley (Miller Ave.), Sun., 10 am
May 5—S.F. (Sloat Blvd.), Wed. 6:30 pm
May 9—San Rafael, Sun., 10 am

Organic Gardening 101

Dinah Sims and Brad Sheehan share how to use natural controls in your garden.
May 2—Novato, Sun., 10 am
May 9—Mill Valley (Miller Ave.), Sun., 10 am
May 30—San Rafael, Sun., 10 am
July 18—Danville, Sun., 10 am

Pests 101

Helen Winkler shares how to control pests in an earth-friendly manner.
May 12—S.F.(Sloat Blvd.), Wed., 6:30 pm

Our Favorite Tools and Gadgets

Alana Cardoso and Earl Holland share the tools that make gardening easier.
May 26—S.F. (Sloat), Wed., 6:30 pm, Holland
June 13—Mill Valley (Miller), Sun., 10 am, Cardoso

Teaching Kids to Garden

Dave Phelps shares fun and easy garden projects for parents to do with kids. Please note: this is not for children, but for adults to teach children.
June 12—Novato, Sat., 10 am
June 26—Mill Valley, (Miller Ave.), Sat., 10 am

Choosing the Right Plant 101

Gus Broucuret, garden coach, shares how to choose the right plant.
July 7—S.F. (Sloat Blvd.), Wed., 6:30 pm

Gophers 101

Helen Winkler explains gopher controls.
July 28—S.F.(Sloat Blvd.), Wed., 6:30 pm

Prune Away! Seminar Series



Pruning Natives

Elizabeth Ruiz, aesthetic pruner, demonstrates the best pruning techniques for natives.
May 8—San Rafael, Sat., 10 am
May 16—S.F. (Pierce St.), Sun., 10 am
May 23—Mill Valley (Miller Ave.), Sun., 10 am

Summer Pruning of Japanese Maples

Marie Miller demonstrates how to enhance these leafy beauties.
June 2—S.F. (Sloat Blvd.), Wed., 6:30 pm
June 6—Mill Valley (Miller Ave.), Sun., 10 am
June 27—Kentfield, Sun., 10 am

Citrus Pruning and Culture

Marie Miller and Elizabeth Ruiz discuss citrus pruning, watering, and fertilizing.
June 23 —S.F. (Sloat Blvd) Wed., 6:30 pm, Ruiz
June 27—S.F. (Pierce St.), Sun., 10 am, Ruiz
July 11—Novato, Sun., 10 am, Miller
July 17—Mill Valley (Miller Ave), Sat., 10 am, Miller
July 25—Kentfield, Sun., 10 am, Miller

Pruning Flowering Perennials

Marie Miller demonstrates how to keep perennials shapely.
Aug. 8—Novato, Sun., 10 am
Aug. 21—Mill Valley, (Miller Ave.), Sat., 10 am
Aug. 29—Kentfield, Sun., 10 am



Little Gardener Seminar Series



Ladybug Release Party

Kids of all ages can make a ladybug costume and watch their friends fly!
May 23—S.F. (Pierce St.), Sun., 10 am
May 30—Mill Valley (Miller Ave.), Sun., 10 am

Sustainability Seminar Series



Making Every Drop Count

Tom Bressan demonstrates drip irrigation basics.
June 27—Mill Valley (Miller Ave.), Sun., 10 am
June 30—S.F. (Sloat Blvd.), Wed., 6:30 pm

Garden Design Seminar Series



Color for the Beginning Gardener

Mary Te Selle and Terri Hiatt share color principles that bring order to your garden.
July 10—Danville, Sat., 10 am, Hiatt
July 21—S.F. (Sloat Blvd), Wed., 6:30 pm, Te Selle
July 24—Mill Valley (Miller), Sat., 10 am, Te Selle

S.F. Sidewalk Planting

Jane Martin discusses which plants are tough but cool for the city sidewalks.
July 25—S.F.(Sloat Blvd.), Sun., 10 am

Vertical Gardening 101

Our designers discuss the different types of vertical gardens and suitable plants.
Aug. 1—Mill Valley (Miller), Sun., 10 am, Strobel
Aug. 25—S.F. (Sloat Blvd), Wed., 6:30 pm, Hiller
Aug. 29 —S.F. (Pierce), Sun., 10 am, Bonilla

Color for the Adventurous Gardener

Mary Te Selle and Terri Hiatt show combinations that bring the wow factor to your design.
Aug. 4—S.F. (Sloat Blvd), Wed., 6:30 pm, Te Selle
Aug. 7—Mill Valley (Miller), Sat., 10 am, Te Selle
Aug. 7—Danville, Sat., 10 am, Hiatt

Succulent Container Gardens

Cindy Bonilla and Jen Strobel demonstrate making small succulent landscapes in a pot.
Aug.11—S.F.(Sloat Blvd), Wed., 6:30 pm, Bonilla
Aug.14—Mill Valley (Miller), Sat., 10 am, Strobel
Aug.15—S.F.(Pierce St.), Sun., 10 am, Bonilla
Aug. 28—Novato, Sat., 10 am, Strobel

Patio Furniture Season

Patio Season is here, and so is our new furniture. This year we are carrying absolutely beautiful Bistro Sets, 2-Seat Benches and Love Seats in long lasting, FSC certified oak. Oak offers teak-like durability and is wear resistant. We also stock similar styles in price friendly eucalyptus (call ahead for individual store availability). Stop in and see our selection!



Left to right: Bistro Set, Love Seat and 2 Seat Bench (all pictured above are oak)



Ways to highlight your new furniture

- Place container plantings using color, texture and height around patio furniture, or purchase a pre-planted Creative Custom Container at any Sloat location
- Set bird feeders around patio areas to watch birds feed and sing
- Create outdoor living spaces by using plants, furniture, colorful pillows and candles.

Succulent Love



of the succulent family, are often thought of separately.)

Those definitions aside, succulents are truly fascinating plants. Their symmetry is unusual in that they radiate from their centers like a living spirograph (math buffs might recognize the patterns of the Fibonacci sequence, or the golden ratio, in the radiating leaves of succulents).

The earthy colors of fleshy succulents are soothing and cooling to the eye...whether a reddish brown or seaweed green or lime tone. And succulents have a wonderful tactile quality – they invite touch.

A succulent is essentially a flowering perennial that stores water in its juicy leaves, stems or roots in order to withstand periodic drought. (Cacti, although members

Most succulents come from desert or semi-desert areas of the world. Surprisingly, not all succulents are appropriate for full sun. Many grow in the shadow of rocks, trees or larger plants.

SUCCULENT CARE: The amount of water that succulents need depends on heat, humidity, atmosphere and rainfall levels, as well as soil texture. Give plants just enough water to keep them plump-leafed and attractive. It's also a good idea to mimic the watering they receive in nature. One light feeding at the start of the growing season should be enough for plants in open ground.

Many gardeners choose to plant succulents in container or rock gardens. Succulents look great planted up with dwarf confiners, ornamental grasses, yarrow, and even herbs such as thyme.

Sloat Garden Center has a wide selection of succulents in stock, starting with basic favorites like echeveria, sedum, agave, aloe and aeonium. Stop by your local Sloat for additional individual selections.



Antique Blue is our Pottery Color of the Month for May & June

Container gardening is a great way to spruce up a porch, walkway, or outdoor entertaining area.



Aeonium



Assorted Succulents

SAVE the DATE!

June 18, 2010
our annual Solstice Sale
(All Sloat locations)
Specials on plants,
pottery, soil and more!

July 11, 2010
our annual
Pottery Sample Sale
(Kentfield location only)
Save on one-of-a-kind Factory Sample
Pottery. Never seen before pots in
trendsetting styles & colors.

Plant up an edible garden

(or flowers, annuals & perennials)

Growing your own food is easy, fun, and rewarding. Join the 7 million U.S. households who started gardening last year by trying one of our planter options this spring. We recommend the MinifarmBox, M Brace Planter and EarthBox. Call ahead to our stores to inquire about availability.

MinifarmBox



MinifarmBoxes are easy to install and maintain, and fit in the smallest of spaces. Your garden, deck, patio, balcony, even your side yard - any flat area that gets 6-8 hours of sunshine and has access to water.

A MinifarmBox keeps soil light, airy and loose, giving plants optimal drainage and air. This gives roots more growing space,

and bigger roots make bigger plants with bigger crops - up to twice the yield of conventional ground planting. MinifarmBox is the perfect no-dig solution for the urban gardener.

- * 100% green-harvested Cedar
- * Lasts 10-15 years
- * Simple tool free assembly
- * No rusty screws, nails or split boards.
- * Assembles easily in 15 minutes!
- * Grows double the yield of regular ground planting
- * Unique design looks great in any yard
- * Uses less water and has less weeds
- * Saves yard space.

M Brace Planter



The **M BRACE Planter** by Art in the Garden is a revolution in raised bed construction...no tools required! Slide any sized boards into the patented brace, fill with soil and plant. That's it! The M BRACE is beautiful too, with laser cut designs to complement any garden.

Adjustable - You decide the length and width of your raised bed-up to 12 feet per side. Use any kind of lumber, even old fence boards and grapes stakes!

Portable and Reusable - Changing your garden plan? Moving? Simply change the length of the boards or take your lumber and the M Brace with you. Made in the U.S. with recycled metal - Art of the Garden is committed to the words "Reduce, Reuse & Recycle!"



EarthBox

Homegrown vegetables without a garden? Yes! The **EarthBox** was developed by commercial farmers and proven in the lab and on the farm. Their maintenance-free, award-winning, high-tech growing system controls soil conditions, eliminates guesswork and more than doubles the yield of a conventional garden-with less fertilizer, less water and virtually no effort.

- * No digging, no weeding, no guesswork
- * Easy to set up in just minutes
- * Includes everything, just add seedlings and water



Worm Café (made by the company that created the Can o' Worms) comes with everything you need to turn organic waste into rich worm castings and worm tea, but with no mess.

Worm Café is easy to use; a hinged lid helps you open and fill your worm farm while a sloping base on the collector tray assists the worm tea to drain easily from the drip free tap to use as a liquid fertilizer around the house and yard.

Because the Worm Café is clean, and odor-free, you can keep it in the garage or basement, even in the house. Other than feeding worms your kitchen scraps, there's very little to do. *Worms sold separately.*

Our favorite plants

We polled our staff about their favorite plants



Phormium 'Yellow Wave'

Brightens any corner of the garden. Set it among darker foliage plants and wait for a rainy day. Its luminance will astound you! Looks great in a tropical landscape with large leaf exotics and hot colored flowers, or in a Mediterranean garden. Plant in groups for a bold effect or in geometric designs for a contemporary look. Also works well around pools, ponds and rock waterfalls or as a potted plant in a modern container.

4-5 ft. high, 5ft. wide.



Loropetalum 'Sizzling Pink'

A double bonus with bronze foliage and bright pink flowers. Plant as a transition between sun and shade gardens or at posts. Use in shrub and perennial beds to make them pop with color, or as foundation planting around outdoor living spaces, (where you and the hummingbirds will enjoy it up close). Makes a great patio plant when grown in a big ceramic pot. 6 ft high and wide (can be kept smaller with pruning).



Tulbaghia (Society Garlic)

With its grassy foliage and tall flower stems, this plant is a delightful addition to the mixed border. Use it in the middle or front of the planting, and contrast it with companions that have bold shape or foliage color. Needs regular watering (weekly, or more often in extreme heat). Vigorous growing foliage clumps. Deer Resistant. Repels gophers and aphids.

1 to 2 ft. stems



LAVATERA



SALVIA

Lavatera and **Salvia** are two of our favorite "go to" plants, if you're looking for low maintenance shrubs that bloom almost year round.

Lavatera (Bush Mallow) is a Mediterranean shrub that is most at home in drier Western landscapes. It looks best as a background shrub for more compact native flowering perennials. It can be clipped or sheared for a more formal character as a hedge or medium-height screen. Perfect on banks and slopes, among landscape boulders and in wild landscapes. Its greatest value is as a source of color in drought-resistant gardens, where its uniquely textured foliage makes a lush back-of-the-border filler. 3-6 ft tall and wide.

We love tall **Salvias** that attract gazillions of hummingbirds from late summer onwards. Salvias are a chameleon, equally suited to traditional mixed borders and cottage gardens with perennials and flowering shrubs or in Mediterranean style gardens. They do well in large artistic pots and are particularly beautiful in quality terra cotta. A superior plant for hot dry slopes and banks. With similar requirements as western natives, salvia is suitable for xeriscape or wild gardens in the driest climates. Once established, needs only occasional watering.

Gardening is a journey, come and have fun with us!

Answers for Spring 2010

plants for spring...and here are their answers!



Fuchsia. Gorgeous, tropical and long blooming! Perfect to liven up a lush, shady patio garden. Light colored foliage creates a striking contrast with deep green plants. Loved by hummingbirds!



Ah, **sunflowers.** So beautiful and easy! Beloved by humans, bees and birds. There is no other plant that gives so much and asks so little.



Fabulous and easy summer/fall color. Attracts butterflies and other pollinators! **Zinnia** love heat and are deer resistant. Bring hot color into your garden!

SPRING PLANTING CHECKLIST

SOIL

- ☐ Sloat Planting Mix
- ☐ Sloat Loam Builder
- ☐ E.B. Stone Planting Compost

FERTILIZERS/FOOD

- ☐ E.B. Stone Sure Start
- ☐ FoxFarm fertilizers
- ☐ Maxsea fertilizer
- ☐ Tomato & Vegetable food

PLANTS

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> annuals | <input type="checkbox"/> seeds |
| <input type="checkbox"/> bird attractors | <input type="checkbox"/> shrubs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> edibles | <input type="checkbox"/> trees |
| <input type="checkbox"/> flowers | <input type="checkbox"/> vines |
| <input type="checkbox"/> natives | <input type="checkbox"/> wildflowers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> perennials | <input type="checkbox"/> water plants |

TOOLS

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> soil & mulch | <input type="checkbox"/> sprinkler |
| <input type="checkbox"/> gloves | <input type="checkbox"/> watering can |
| <input type="checkbox"/> hoe | <input type="checkbox"/> water wand |
| <input type="checkbox"/> hose nozzle | <input type="checkbox"/> spade |
| <input type="checkbox"/> pottery | <input type="checkbox"/> shovel |
| <input type="checkbox"/> rake | <input type="checkbox"/> pruners |

TIPS

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Don't forget to water and fertilize your plants! | <input type="checkbox"/> Make sure pruners are sharp |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Keep seeds moist until leaves appear | <input type="checkbox"/> Contact our Design Department |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Use a moisture meter to check your soil's moisture level | <input type="checkbox"/> Get a Sunset Gardening book - great for descriptions and requirements of thousands of plants - a great beginner's guide! |

For more spring planting ideas, visit us at www.sloatgardens.com

Start your gardening projects off right!



E.B. Stone's **Planting Compost** is a genuine compost. Blended for use in all soil types and for all types of outdoor gardening and mulching.



Sloat Loam Builder
Rich with chicken manure, use Loam Builder to build up soil in vegetable gardens.



Sloat Organic Planting Mix – 100% Organic, our Planting Mix promotes drainage, air and water penetration, and loosens clay soil.