

Gardener's Notebook

Volume 25, No. 2

News, Advice & Special Offers for Bay Area Gardeners

May/June 2011

Tomaccio: The sweet raisin tomato!

Welcome a new snack cherry tomato to your garden this spring



Tomaccio is a new cherry tomato that tastes sweet and delicious eaten fresh or dried. It's easy to grow in a container or in the ground. Here are a few key notes about this tasty new variety:

- Tomaccio has an intense, sugary flavor that intensifies when dried. It will dry easily on the vine, in a food dehydrator or a conventional oven. Known as the "sweet raisin tomato", dried Tomaccio is great as a portable snack (similar to other dried fruits) or as an accompaniment in pasta dishes, pizza, salads and pesto.
- This extremely robust plant has an unprecedented yield (12-18 lbs. per season). Tomaccio should be harvested early; as the cluster begins to turn red, you can harvest each branch for individual drying. Also, like any other tomato, tomaccio plants will need to be supported with stakes.
- Tomaccio plants are available starting late May and early June in 1½ gallon staked peat pots. Quantities are limited and pre-orders are accepted at all Sloat Garden Center locations.



Grown for its high sugar content, the tomaccio's sweetness intensifies when dried



Basil varieties are in stores now: Choose from Genovese, purple opal, spicy globe, African blue basil and Italian large leaf

✓ When to plant favorite fruits, vegetables & herbs

Blueberries	Year Round
Corn	April & May
Cucumbers	Early May
Eggplant	April & May
Figs	Year Round
Grapes	Year Round
Peppers	April & May
Pumpkins	April, May, June
Strawberries	Feb – June
Summer Squash	April – July
Watermelon	April, May, June



Carrots	Year Round
Chard	Year Round
Herbs	Year Round
Kale	Year Round
Lettuces	Year Round
Radishes	Year Round

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

Richmond District
327 3rd Ave between
Geary & Clement
(415) 752-1614

Sunset District
2700 Sloat Blvd.
46th & Sloat Blvd.
(415) 566-4415

Marina District
3237 Pierce Street
Chestnut & Lombard
(415) 440-1000
9 to 6:30

Novato
2000 Novato Blvd.
at Wilson
(415) 897-2169

San Rafael
1580 Lincoln Ave.
just off Hwy. 101
(415) 453-3977

Mill Valley (Near Downtown)
401 Miller Ave. at La Goma
(415) 388-0365
Garden Design Department
(415) 388-3754

Mill Valley
657 E. Blithedale at Lomita
(415) 388-0102

Kentfield
700 Sir Francis Drake Blvd.
at Wolfe Grade
(415) 454-0262

Danville
828 Diablo Road at El Cerro
(925) 743-0288

*M-Sat hours: 8 to 6:30pm
Sun hours: 8am to 5pm*

Bulk Soils
828 Diablo Road at El Cerro
(925) 820-1273
*(East Bay delivery only)
M-Sat 8-4:30*

Visit us on the web: www.sloatgardens.com



420 Coloma Street
Sausalito, CA 94965-1428



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(or as noted above in Danville & SF Marina)

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We'll help you grow the plants you love!

**Don't Forget Mother's Day (May 8th)
& Father's Day (June 19th). Stop by Sloat
Garden Center for great gift ideas!**

8 SLOAT NOTEBOOK *May/June 2011*

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 or transplant salad greens, green beans, 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: **Nature's Green Lawn Food**.

Prune/Maintain

- ☞ Continue to deadhead roses, shrubs and other flowers with **Felco pruners** to encourage new blooms; for smaller jobs, such as grooming your container creations, use Fiskars Micro Tip Snips
- ☞ 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.

About this Newsletter: The Gardener's Notebook is published three times a year by Sloat Garden Center for the education and enjoyment of Bay Area gardeners. Information is collected from Sloat's expert staff, current horticultural publications and Sunset's Western Garden Book. Send address corrections to: 420 Coloma Street, Sausalito, CA 94965 or via email to sloat@sloatgardens.com

Succulent care made easy.



Aeonium

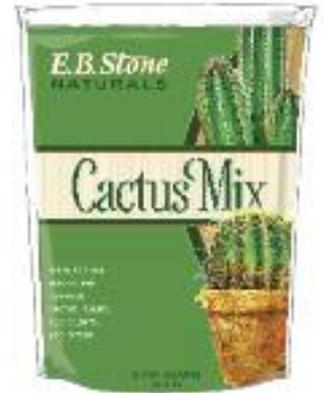
Most succulents come from dry, summer drought areas of the world. Surprisingly, not all succulents are appropriate for full sun. Many grow in the shadow of rocks, trees or larger plants. But all need the right soil mix in order to succeed.

SUCCULENT CARE: We recommend planting with **E. B. Stone Cactus Mix**; an ideal potting mix for all types of cactus and succulents. It contains Fir Bark, Lava Rock, Canadian Sphagnum Peat Moss, Sand, Redwood Compost and Mushroom Compost.

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-leaved 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.

Succulents look great planted up with dwarf conifers, 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.

E.B.Stone



E. B. Stone Cactus Mix

Relax into spring...

Ah...relax into patio season on our Bistro Sets, Benches and Love Seats in long lasting, FSC certified oak. Oak offers teak-like durability and is wear resistant. Call ahead for individual store availability.



Left to right: Bistro Set, Love Seat

Incredible Edible Food Drive: May 21st through May 30th

Please join us in supporting local food shelves. You can help by:

1. Bring in an unopened can or box of food to any Sloat Garden Center from May 21-30. Customers who donate will receive one free 4" vegetable plant.
2. Then, plant and grow an extra row of vegetables, fruits or herbs....and donate the harvest to your local food bank (we have information about the **Grow a Row for the Hungry** program - including information on fresh produce drop off locations at food pantries).



SAVE the DATE!

June 17 - all locations
Gardener's Reward Members ONLY
Solstice Preview: 8am - 8pm
(Shop one day early before the general public!)

June 18 & 19 - all locations
our 11th annual Solstice Sale
regular store hours
*Specials on plants,
pottery, soil and more!*

July 10, 11, 12 - Kentfield only
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.*

3 ways to combat gophers in the garden



Dealing with gophers in the lawn or garden can be maddening. The key with gophers is to start off aggressive, especially in the spring and fall when they reproduce. We have three tips that you can try but please be advised...gopher proofing is not fool-proof!

Exclude/Repel them

- For smaller lawns and gardens, you can try to exclude gophers with wire fencing or hardware cloth. The fencing should be set at a depth of at least 2' underground and extend above the surface at least a foot. This works especially well for raised beds. Pre-made gopher cages are useful for plantings or use the new felt **Smart Pot**.
- There are many repellents on the market that utilize Castor oil as their base (this will not be poisonous to pets, birds, or children). They come in both liquid spray and granular forms. The sprays can be used to "move gophers back". Applying the spray to a gradually larger area, usually directed to where you want them to exit the property, does this. *Both of these options should be considered first thing when planting a vegetable garden!*
- If you live in an area that has owls, make your yard hospitable to them -- because owls feed on gophers.

Trap them

Even though it is the most time-consuming, the benefit is that you have definitely eliminated the gopher. Choose areas that are being freshly dug. You will have to dig down to the main tunnel. Carefully position your trap. You will need to attach the trap to a stake with a wire or chain. The metal u-pins used to secure irrigation are ideal. Wear gloves

to keep the human smell off the trap. It is sometimes of benefit to use 2 traps, one facing in either direction. Re-cover the tunnel with a piece of sod but leave a small window for light to get through. Gophers do not like light in their tunnels and will come to investigate and repair. If you have not caught your animal in 2 days, move to another area. Once you have caught a gopher at one site, replant your trap in the same location. Chances are there is more than one using the tunnel. This is especially true in the spring and early summer.

Use "gopher resistant" plants

These plants are usually left alone by gophers. It should be noted that many plants that are deer resistant are also gopher resistant.

Shrubs: Arbutus unedo, Buddleja, Callistemon, Ceanothus, Escallonia, Euonymus, Grevillea, Heteromeles, Hydrangea, Michelia, Nandina, Oleander, Rosemary, Westringia, Ilex, Coleonema, Citrus, Rhamphiolepis, Ribes, Cistus

Perennials: Begonia (fibrous), Dietes, Lantana, Lavender, Nepeta, Penstemon, Salvia, Vinca minor, Artemesia, Euphorbia, Shasta Daisy, Clivia, Heuchera splendens (scarlet Coralbells), Juncus, Festuca, Nierembergia, Digitalis

Bulbs: Scilla, Narcissus/Daffodil, Amaryllis belladonna, Allium, Muscari, Tulbahia, Onion, Garlic

Trees: Fraxinus, Eucalyptus, Apricot, Avocado, Pomegranate

And unfortunately...the following plants have been identified as sure bet gopher foods: most bulbs, most vegetables. Especially carrots, peas, potatoes and parsley, Aster, Campanula, California Poppy, Lavatera, Miscanthus, Phormium, Rose, and Salvia uliginosa.

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.

Organic Lawn Care

Dave Phelps discusses safe practices to keep our lawns healthy

- May 1 – Mill Valley (Miller Ave.), Sun., 10 am
- May 4 – S.F. (Sloat Blvd.), Wed., 6:30 pm
- May 22 – Novato, Sun., 10 am

Summer Citrus Care

Elizabeth Ruiz discusses pruning and fertilizing citrus

- May 15 – Mill Valley (Miller Ave.), Sun., 10 am
- May 18 – S.F. (Sloat Blvd.), Wed., 6:30 pm

Vegetables in Small Spaces/Containers

Jen Strobel discusses and demonstrates how to grow food in small spaces

- May 21 – Mill Valley (Miller Ave.), Sat., 10 am
- May 21 – San Rafael, Sat., 1 pm

Container Water Gardens

Dustin Strobel shows us how create fun container water gardens

- June 1 – S.F. (Sloat Blvd.), Wed., 6:30 pm
- June 11 – San Rafael, Sat., 10 am
- June 12 – Danville, Sun., 10 am

High Impact Succulent/Perennial Container Gardens

Jen Strobel uses her magic to create stunning container combinations

- June 4 – Novato, Sat., 10 am
- July 16 – Mill Valley (Miller Ave.), Sat., 10 am
- July 16th – Kentfield, Sat., 1 pm

Easy Gardening Without Toxic Solutions

Join Annie Joseph and Dave Phelps in a discussion on how to keep gardens naturally healthy

- June 22 – S.F. (Sloat Blvd.), Wed., (Dave) 6:30 pm
- June 25 – Mill Valley (Miller), Sat., (Annie) 10 am
- June 26 – Novato, Sun., 10 am



San Francisco Design Solutions

Join Gloria Sanchez for a 2- part discussion in getting the most out of your city space

Part 1: *Creating views into the garden*

July 6 – S.F. (Sloat Blvd.), Wed., 6:30 pm

Part 2: *Making a small front garden your own*

July 20 – S.F. (Sloat Blvd.), Wed., 6:30 pm

Grilling Homegrown Vegetables with Brad Sheehan

Join Brad for vegetable growing tips and how best to enjoy fresh vegetables grilled to perfection

July 10 – Danville, Sun., 12 noon

Bonide's Rose Rx 3-In-1 isn't just for roses & flowers!



Bonide's Rose Rx 3-In-1 rose and flower care is an easy to apply, all-in-one product that provides protection against all 3 major categories of rose and flower pests (insects, diseases, and mites). So gardeners take note; this product provides broad protection for a range of plants -- all in one bottle.

Formulated with Neem Oil, Rose Rx 3-In-1 can be applied any time to virtually any flowering plant for fast acting protection. It can also be used indoors on



houseplants to protect against common diseases, insects and mites. Neem Oil is a naturally occurring product which is extracted from the seeds of the Neem tree. Neem kills by interfering with the insect's life cycle; this prevents them from reaching the mature stage at which they feed or do damage. Because Neem needs to be ingested by insects to be effective, it's very gentle on beneficial insects, including bees, butterflies and beneficial predators. Please note: because bees can be adversely effected before neem oil has dried, we recommend spraying later in the afternoon after bees have stopped foraging for the day. Bonide Rose Rx 3-In-1 is approved by the USDA for organic gardening, meeting the criteria for a natural plant care product.

Control pests naturally with an application of Bonide Rose Rx 3-In-1, and enjoy beautiful roses, flowers and plants all season long!

Attracting beneficials to your garden

In the past few years, beneficial insects have gained popularity as we all strive to reduce the use of pesticides in our gardens. Many adult predaceous insects feed on pollen and nectar to supplement or replace their insect diet. It is, in fact, the larvae of these insects that eat the majority of plant pests. Therefore, it's in our best interest

as gardeners to provide a stable habitat (such as a perennial border) for our predatory friends to live, feed and lay their eggs. (This means you should try to avoid excessive mowing or tilling of your "bug bank").

Beneficial predators!



ladybug

Ladybugs feed on aphids, scale insects and plant mites. By the way, aphids are tiny, soft bodied insects that suck the nutrients away from plants by infesting new foliage and ingesting their fluids. Aphids also spread disease by moving from one plant to another.



praying mantis

Praying mantis offspring, called nymphs, emerge in late spring or early summer. These nymphs have voracious appetites for aphids and other small insects.



green lacewing

Lacewing larvae eat small insects as they grow: aphids, scale insects, leafhoppers, thrips, small flies, and mites.

These plants will attract beneficial predators (and pollinators)

ANNUALS AND PERENNIALS

Cosmos, Alyssum, Yarrow, Aster, Coreopsis, Borage, Scabiosa, Calendula, Clover, Caryopteris (Blue Beard), Wallflower, Evening Primrose, Sedum, Lobelia, Santa Barbara Daisy, Agrostemma (*Corn Cockle*), Cone flowers, Queen Anne's Lace, Limonium (Sea Lavender), Sunflowers, Buckwheat, Penstemon, Baby's Breath, Veronica, Columbine, Marigold, Monarda (Bee Balm), Ajuga (Carpet Bugle), Lavender, Zinnia

VIRTUALLY ALL HERBS (ESPECIALLY IN FLOWER)

Fennel	Tansy	Cilantro (Coriander)
Caraway	Feverfew	Valerian
Dill	Parsley	Rue
Catnip	Chamomile	Sage
Thyme	Chervil	Lemon Balm
Sweet Marjorum	Lovage	Oregano
Rosemary	Chives	Mint

VEGETABLES (ESPECIALLY WHEN BOLTED/FLOWERING)

Broccoli	Lettuce	Jerusalem Artichoke
Onions	Cabbage	Artichoke
Leeks	Kale	Carrot

EVEN SOME LOWLY WEEDS

Dandelion	Plantain	Vetch
Thistle	Shepard's Purse	

Bring color to your garden with Hydrangeas, Bougainvilleas & Flower carpet roses

Hydrangea



Hydrangea: Cityline Series



Hydrangea: Limelight



Hydrangea: Invinciball



Hydrangea: Cityline Paris

Bougainvillea



Bougainvillea: Barbara Karst



Bougainvillea: Purple Queen



Bougainvillea: Don Mario

Hydrangea: These four new hydrangea varieties have longer bloom times, and are repeat bloomers. Beautiful summer color for containers or borders. Doesn't have pest issues.

Bougainvillea: This dry loving semi-deciduous tropical vine will do well in Bay Area gardens and patios. You can grow bougainvillea on arbors, pergolas, gazebos, trellises, and up walls. Twine them up posts and columns. These three varieties are cold hardy.

Flower Carpet Roses



Flower Carpet Rose: white



Flower Carpet Rose: amber



Flower Carpet Rose: coral

Flower Carpet Roses: these are easy care, low maintenance summer flowers for the landscape. They are self-cleaning (so you don't need to clip off old flowers), and they're disease resistant.

Seacoast Gardens

This guide will help you choose the plants that will succeed in your particular Bay Area environment



Seacoast Groundcover:
Gazania



Seacoast Perennial:
Erigeron



Seacoast Texture:
Phormium



Seacoast Groundcover:
Armeria



Seacoast Perennial:
Artemisia



Seacoast Perennial:
Achillea (yarrow)



Seacoast Perennial:
Echium



Seacoast Perennial: Phlomis



Seacoast Shrub:
Pittosporum



Seacoast Succulent:
Echeveria



Seacoast Perennial: Geranium



Seacoast Texture:
Cordyline



Seacoast Shrub:
Dodonaea

Seacoast plants

Herbs: Rosemary, Oregano, Thyme, Marjoram, Sage (sun). Parsley, cilantro, mint (shade), African blue Basil (outdoors) and Italian Basil (indoors on a sunny window)

Shrubs: Eriogonum (buckwheat), Lantana, Dodonaea, Hebe, Escallonia, Pittosporum tobira

Texture: Phormium and Cordyline, Fescue, Nasella, Muhlenbergia

Groundcovers: Armeria, Sedum, Gazania

Perennials: Euphorbia, Limonium perezii (sea lavender), Achillea (yarrow), Geraniums (common zonal type), Phlomis, Santolina, Erigeron, Tulbaghia, Echium, Artemesia

Succulents: Aloe, Aeonium, Echeveria

Soil amendments for sandy soil (which tends toward alkaline): Sloat Forest Mulch Plus, Sloat Planting Mix, Sloat Planting Compost (these should be mixed 50/50 with existing soil).

Woodland Gardens

Woodland gardens:
(for under redwoods and tall canopied trees). Tolerates shade & clay soils.

Seacoast gardens:
(for gardens by the beach). Will tolerate wind, salt & sandy soils.



Woodland Herb:
Mint



Woodland Shrub:
Blueberry



Woodland Shrub:
Azalea



Woodland Texture:
Clivia



Woodland Groundcover:
Manzanita



Woodland Perennial:
Helleborus



Woodland Texture:
Pacific Coast Iris



Woodland Groundcover:
Campanula



Woodland Perennial:
Dicentra



Woodland Perennial:
Digitalis



Woodland Perennial & Texture
Heuchera & Ferns



Woodland Perennial:
Anemone



Woodland Shrub:
Aucuba

Woodland plants

Herbs: Mint

Shrubs: Blueberries, Sollya (Australian Bluebell), Sarcococca, Symphoricarpos (snowberry), Mahonia, Daphne, Rhododendron/Azalea, Aucuba, Ribes

Texture: Ferns -- Western Sword and Giant chain (both native), Liriope, Pacific Coast Iris, Aspidistra, Clivia, Astilbe

Groundcovers: Manzanita (Arctostaphylos), Lamium, Rubus pentalobus (R. calycinoides), Asarum, Campanula, Galium (Sweet Woodruff)

Perennials: Digitalis, Dicentra, Helleborus, Epimedium, Thalictrum, Heuchera/Tiarella, Brunnera, Ompholoides, Aquilegia, Anemone, Tradescantia, Mimulus

Soil amendments for clay soils (which tends toward acidic): E.B. Stone Azalea/Camellia mix, Sloat Planting Mix, and Planting Compost.