

S l o a t



G a r d e n C e n t e r

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1958!

Gardener's Notebook

Volume 27, No. 2

News, Advice & Special Offers for Bay Area Gardeners

May/June 2013

PRETTY PETUNIAS & COLORFUL CALIBRACHOA



Discover these gorgeous, new and unique Petunias and Calibrachoa with habits that spill over pots and hanging baskets. (Clockwise from top left)

Petunia Glamouphage Grape. This new variety is a *must-have!* With brightly colored grape-purple flowers that scream against variegated foliage, it has a great form for container combinations.



Petunia Panache™ Lemonade Stand. Bright yellow ruffled blooms are a bold contrast in mixed containers.

Calibrachoa Kimono™ Tokyo Sunset. Large flowers are set off by deep eye zones. Like a sunset, Tokyo Sunset offers a myriad of colors in shades of orange, yellow and red.



Calibrachoa Kimono™ Koi. Creamy orange flowers are set off by bright orange centers.



Love lavender? Phenomenal is a dream come true

Lavender Phenomenal is a hardy new Lavender developed and introduced by Lloyd Traven, owner of Peace Tree Farm in Pennsylvania. Named a 'Must-Grow Perennial' for 2013 by Better Homes & Gardens magazine, it's one of the hardiest Lavenders we've seen. Lavender Phenomenal has exceptional winter survival, because it does not have the winter dieback that other Lavender varieties have experienced. It's also tolerant of extreme heat and humidity, and is resistant to common root and foliar diseases. Grows to 2-3 ft. tall. Lavender 'Phenomenal':

- Has silvery foliage, consistent growth and a uniform, mounding habit
- Has elegant flowers and gorgeous fragrance
- Is ornamental and edible
- Is a deer-resistant variety that can be enjoyed year-round



INSIDE: new grafted tomatoes, gopher control, Trixi combinations, beautiful Cordyline and more!

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

Richmond District
3rd Avenue 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
657 E. Blithedale at Lomita
(415) 388-0102 (near 101)
401 Miller Ave. at La Goma
(415) 388-0365 (near downtown)

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

Garden Design Department
401 Miller, Mill Valley
(415) 388-3754

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

Visit us on the web: www.sloatgardens.com

Open 7 days per week 8:30am to 6:30pm
(or as noted above in Danville & SF Marina)

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Sloat



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owned since
1958!

Garden Center

420 Coloma Street
Sausalito, CA 94965-1428

Don't Forget **Mother's Day** (May 12th)
& **Father's Day** (June 16th). Stop by
Sloat Garden Center for great gifts!

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We'll help you grow the plants you love!

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a Sloat Garden Center
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on Twitter. Check out
sloatgardens.com for details.

Bay Area Gardening Guide:

May & June

May

Plant

- Plant annuals like Petunias, Marigolds, Begonias, Lobelia, and Coleus. Re-seed Radishes, Carrots and Beets.
- Plant late summer edibles such as 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 and 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 them with all-purpose fertilizers such as **E.B. Stone Organics and Maxsea**.
- Feed your lawn with **Nature's Green Lawn Food**.
- 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 increase their size and prevent branches from breaking. Harvest vegetables as they ripen so plants continue producing.

Lucky for Bay Area Gardeners, colorful Hydrangea love our climate

Hydrangea Royal Purple

Clear, purple, mop-head blooms are 8" wide with lush and mildew-resistant green foliage. An excellent, cold hardy addition for dappled shade. Grows to 5 ft. tall and wide. Dead head for repeat bloom. May turn pink in alkaline soils (*read about how to change hydrangea's color at right*).



Hydrangea Pistachio

Hydrangea Pistachio is a re-bloomer that features flower clusters in a range of naturally occurring, mind-bending color: pink-green flowers age to deep green and then back to pink!

Usually grown in shade, this plant has fierce flowering from early summer to fall. Salt-tolerant and great for harvesting cut flowers. Pistachio is a **wow!!**



Hydrangea Blue Billow

Lacecap hydrangeas get their name from their unique flat shape and flower pattern (a cluster of small fertile flowers surrounded by a ring of larger sterile ones). This hydrangea has dark, shiny leaves and vigorous blue flower heads. Perfect for shady areas. Prune as needed to control form.



★ HOW TO: *change Hydrangea's color*

Hydrangea have the unique feature of being nature's pH tester. Flower heads are pink or red when the soil is alkaline (high pH), and blue when it is acidic (low pH). This presents a creative opportunity to change the flower color by adjusting the soil's pH prior to the blooming period. The best time to do this is early fall.

For Blue: Use Greenall's True Blue to lower the pH.

For Red/Pink: E.B. Stone Agricultural Lime will raise the pH.

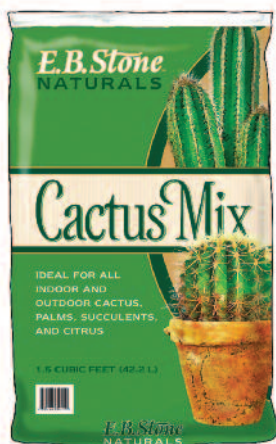
Note: Color manipulation doesn't work with white varieties.

Looking for a fast-growing, long-blooming shrub that will put on a big show throughout the summer and fall? Hydrangea is your plant. Hydrangeas love our climate, especially the coastal areas of Marin and San Francisco. They thrive even in average soil, with their only true requirement being regular watering. Hydrangeas can be massed for impact in light sun or partial shade. Their full form is ideal for pairing with other shrubs or trees.

Hydrangea blossoms are great cut flowers and the leaves are a beautiful addition to arrangements. Whether you use them in shrub borders or as single plants, when hydrangeas bloom, you've got color! Shades of blue, red, pink, and white really stand out, enhanced by equally beautiful glossy-green, oval leaves.

Big-leaf hydrangeas are available in two different but equally beautiful flower forms. Mophead blooms are dense and dome shaped, resembling pom-poms. Lacecap flowers are flat and open. Plant hydrangea this May for June blossoms and you won't be disappointed.

Give cactus and succulents a healthy start



Most succulents come from desert or semi-dry areas in warmer parts of the world, yet not all succulents want full sun. Many need to

grow in the shadow of rocks, trees or larger plants. However, all need the right soil mix to succeed.

E. B. Stone Cactus Mix is the perfect soil combination to keep succulents and cactus healthy. It contains fir bark,

lava rock, Canadian sphagnum peat moss, sand, redwood compost and mushroom compost, and works in containers or mixed into the ground. If you have questions about growing succulents, we can help. Drop by Sloat Garden Center!

★ HOW TO: *care for succulents*

The amount of water that succulents need depends on heat, humidity, atmosphere and rainfall levels, as well as soil texture. A good rule of thumb is to 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 is enough for plants in the ground.

Succulents look great combined with other types of plants, but plan combinations carefully and consider different growing requirements. In our planted containers we often combine succulents with natives, ornamental grasses, ground covers and even herbs.

We carry a wide selection of succulents, starting with basic favorites like echeveria, sedum, agave, aloe and aeonium ... all the way to unique specimens. Stop by your local Sloat Garden Center for individual selections.

Cordyline! exotic ★ tropical ★ colorful ★ easy

Cordyline are woody plants with swordlike leaves that are related to yuccas and agaves. Over the years, they've become a staple of Mediterranean and California bungalow design. They look lovely in the landscape, next to water features, in containers or used as tropical effects.

Originally home to the South Pacific, this plant was named cabbage tree because of its roots. Additionally, it provided a valuable carbohydrate food source and early missionaries brewed beer from it. The leaves and roots also produced plentiful fibers for everything from food wrappers to thatching and sandals.

★ HOW TO: grow *Cordyline*

Cordyline do best with well drained soil. They're fairly drought-tolerant in coastal gardens, but more lush with regular irrigation. Hardy to around 15°, they grow exceedingly well in our climate. Give Cordyline full sun and feed lightly annually.



Cha Cha

A colorful new clumping variety that grows 3' to 4' tall. It has weeping, variegated foliage in a blend of colors that start out apricot and peach, then mature to a mix of yellow and green. All colors are present at the same time.



Electric Pink

An outrageously bright pink plant with an upright habit of many narrow, dark maroon leaves that are edged with bright pink - truly electric! It flourishes in full sun, which enhances the color of its leaves but will also grow well in light shade. Grows to 4' tall.



Electric Star

An interesting plant with a clumping upright habit. Electric Star has many narrow leaves that appear mostly green but have a deep burgundy central stripe -- very unusual! Grows to 4 feet tall.



May 3 - 12

Strawberry Jam Session

Join us in celebrating strawberries May 3rd to 12th. We'll have strawberries ready to flower and fruit, as well as everything you need to grow them successfully.

Tip: We recommend planting 5 strawberry plants per person in your household for optimum backyard berry production.



Did you know that crushed strawberries, basil, thyme and mint are the perfect ingredients for an amazingly fresh summer cocktail? Visit our website for a recipe!

www.sloatgardens.com



Each Sloat Garden Center location makes **custom designed planters** in a variety of colors, styles and sizes. We can also create custom containers with the plants and pottery you choose. Just pick out your favorite plants and pottery...we'll do the rest!



Use Sloat Loam Builder for strawberries

A unique blend of chicken manure and composted mushroom soil, our Loam Builder enhances bacterial action in existing ground soil. It's an excellent amendment for vegetables, as well as most shrubs, roses and flowers. Use organic Loam Builder as a yearly amendment to improve drainage and overall soil health.

Mighty 'Mato grafted tomatoes are stronger and faster growing than regular tomato plants, and their harvests are much, much bigger. Mighty 'Mato has been bred to be resistant to pests, diseases, temperature extremes and poor soils, while producing long, abundant harvests of tasty fruit.

Grafted tomatoes were first developed to allow gardeners in areas with cooler, short season climates (ie: Seattle, Portland and San Francisco) to grow and successfully harvest larger heirloom and heat loving tomatoes. As a result, increased yield and vigor has created demand for these tomatoes everywhere.

Grafting is a process that joins the top part of one plant (the scion) to the root system of a separate plant (the rootstock). As their tissues heal, they fuse into one super plant that combines the rootstock's vigor and disease resistance with the scion's exceptional fruit quality and flavor (*as a side note: this does NOT mean the plants are genetically modified*). When planting, the graft must stay above soil level. Prune lateral suckers for best fruiting.

Please note: *Our grafted tomato quantities are limited. Shop early for the best selection!*



5 new grafted tomato varieties at Sloat Garden Center this spring!



Copia

This beautiful bi-color heirloom slicer is streaked in glowing gold and crimson with sweet, juicy, red and yellow swirled flesh. Excellent, clean flavor.



Brandywine

This famous heirloom produces 1-2 lb., scarlet-pink beefsteaks with high acid and sugar content. One of the world's best-tasting tomatoes!



Paul Robeson

Slightly flattened, dark red heirloom beefsteaks are 4" across with greenish shoulders. Luscious red flesh has earthy, exotic, well-balanced flavor. Cold tolerant.



Julia Child

Deep pink, slightly fluted 4" heirloom beefsteaks with robust flavor and juicy flesh ripen on tall vigorous plants.



Early Girl

Bright red, 4-6 oz. round slicers ripen early, with dependable and flavorful fruits in almost any climate! 50-60 days to fruit.

★ HOW TO: grow tomatoes

SOIL: Well-drained soil that is high in organic matter is best. If your soil tends to be heavy or sandy, dig in Sloat Loam Builder or Sloat Forest Mulch Plus, which contains 15% chicken manure. Incorporate Agricultural Lime to insure a good supply of calcium, which prevents blossom end rot and helps build strong cell walls.

SUN: Tomatoes require full sun. This is considered no less than 6 hours of direct sun per day. Plants will be weak and unhealthy with anything less. In cool areas, planting tomatoes against a sunny wall or fence will help in production and ripening of fruit.

PLANTING: Make the planting hole extra deep. Plant the young tomatoes deep in the hole so that the first set of leaves is just above the soil level. (*Please note: grafted tomato varieties should not be planted as deeply as regular tomatoes*). Roots will form on the buried stem, creating a larger and stronger root system. If you use tomato cages, be sure to put them in place before the plants get too large.



Don't skimp on the size of the cage, because tomatoes WILL outgrow smaller cages and eventually fall over. A 1" x 1" stake that is 6 feet tall, driven firmly into the ground, will also provide adequate support. Place it one foot from the base of the plant. Tie the plant onto the stake as it grows. Use ties that will not cut or chafe the stem of the plant. Water young plants deeply and frequently, tapering off as fruit develops. Never water tomatoes from above because too much water on the leaves can cause disease problems, scalding and fruit crack.

FERTILIZER: An all purpose fertilizer or vegetable food should be applied every two weeks, beginning when blossoms first appear. Maxsea All Purpose or E.B. Stone Organic Tomato & Vegetable Food are good choices.





Blueberry Parfait



Old Glory



Twinkle Star

photo credits: Ball Horticultural Company

More Colorful Trixi Combinations

Looking for even more eye-catching color? Trixi combinations are our new flowering collections that bloom vigorously throughout summer and fall. Created with different varieties of Calibrachoa, Verbena, Bacopa and Petunia (though color and exact variety can vary), they're perfect for displaying in pots, window boxes, flower boxes or hanging baskets. We are carrying these lovely combinations in 10" hanging baskets and 6" pots, and will offer new combinations through the end of June. *Please note:* These combinations are not available at all Sloat locations. Call ahead for availability.



Old Glory

May Combinations

Blueberry Parfait: Bacopa Big Pearl Falls, Calibrachoa Lavender Blue and Verbena Fuego Magic Light Pink

Old Glory: Calibrachoa Compact White, Dark Blue and Vampire Red

June Combinations

Twinkle Star: Bacopa Big Pearl Falls, Bidens Namid Yellow and Calibrachoa Dark Blue

On LOCATION in Mill Valley with Sloat Garden Center Manager Donna Chapman



Miller Avenue (Mill Valley)
Manager Donna Chapman

What makes the Sloat Miller Avenue location special?

We're located off the main road, near the heart of Mill Valley. We're a neighborhood nursery and we have a very relaxed feeling in our store. Come on in!

What do you like most about your job?

I love helping customers and showing them plants and watching their eyes light up. Their attitude changes and I see the joy in their faces. It makes me happy that I am able to make their day. Also, my team is excellent. They are all very knowledgeable and have different strengths: edibles, houseplants, pottery, landscape design ... or if you just want to put together a colorful pot for your deck or front door. We all know something about plants and together we work to answer plant questions. This store would not be successful without them.

Why do you love plants?

Twenty years ago when I started at Marine World Africa USA, I was a gardener and had many different tasks. My favorite thing was planting plants through the seasons and watching the plants I planted grow. From then on I was hooked.

If you had to pick one favorite plant, what would it be?

Magnolia grandiflora. It makes a big, bold statement in the garden. I love the glossy leaves and big white flowers. Unfortunately I don't have enough sun in my yard to grow it at home.



Magnolia grandiflora

What do you have planted in your garden at home?

My yard is mostly shade, so I have Viburnum, Ferns, Clivia, Hydrangeas, Camellias and Campanula. I do have a small 10x10 sun space, so I'm able to enjoy my five Roses.



Camellia



Shade plants at the Sloat Garden Center
Miller Avenue (Mill Valley) store

What is your favorite/most useful tool?

I like pruners. I can even use a pruner to cut a flower to enjoy inside.



new pottery 2013



Bold new pottery colors are here for spring and summer: Atomic Red, Atomic Orange, Atomic Yellow and Imperial White. Gorgeous with any combination of plants in a variety of sizes and styles (varies by store).

Planting suggestions are as follows:

Atomic red: Heucherella Stoplight, Euphorbia martinii, Hakonechloa aureola, Diascia Coral Red, Rumex sanguineum (ornamental beet), coleus and white Bacopa.

Atomic yellow: Alchemilla mollis, yellow, red, orange Columbine, Lamium Golden Anniversary, Abutilon Capella (yellow).

Atomic Orange: Hosta variegated, Hart's fern (Blechnum), Libertia peregrins, Lysimachia Aurea.

Imperial White: Shasta daisy, Sanvitalia, Asparagus fern, variegated Miscanthus Zebrinus or Yaku jima.



Atomic Yellow Pottery with: Heucherella Stoplight, Acorus Ogon, Oxalis Burgundy x2, Bacopa Gold and Pearls



Atomic Red Pottery with: Lomandra, Pelargonium Vancouver Centennial, Parrots Beak Lotus, Bacopa Gold and Pearls

Hats off to gardeners!

In the sun-filled Bay Area, a good sun hat is a must-have to protect skin while gardening, walking, playing or just being outdoors. We're always on the look-out for high quality, yet good looking hats; we've found them for the 2013 garden season with **Sunday Afternoon Hats**. Designed with comfort in mind, they also have a minimum sun protective rating of UPF 40+. They are dermatologist-approved and carry the seal of recommendation from the Melanoma International Foundation. Enjoy the sunshine wisely with Sunday Afternoons! *Please note: not all hats are available at all Sloat locations. Call ahead for availability.*



Solar bucket: cream, chaparral, tan, fresh plum and lapis (shown)



Mendocino: natural



Cruiser hat: cream sand, tan (shown) chaparral and sand black



Caribbean hat: ocean, driftwood (shown), blue shadow and dune



Palm Springs hat: adobe, cactus (shown), onyx, sandstone and terracotta



Natalie ribbon hat: black (shown), brandywine, seabreeze, soft willow, taupe and whipped cream

SPRING gardening 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.*

Pruning the Acid Lovers: Rhododendrons, Azaleas and Camellias

Our favorite pruner, Elizabeth Ruiz, returns to explain and show us how to shape and prune these acid lovers.
 Wednesday, May 1st, 6:30pm, Sloat Blvd.
 Saturday, May 4th, 10:30am, Novato
 Sunday, May 5th, 12noon, Danville

Spring Pruning of Japanese Maples

Did you know that spring pruning is good for your Japanese Maple? Elizabeth Ruiz, an aesthetic pruner, will explain how and why to prune.
 Saturday, May 18th, 10:30am, Miller Ave., Mill Valley

Herbs and Edible Flowers in the Home Garden

Join Norma Novy of the Soil Sisters for a very informative talk on growing these tasty plants successfully.
 Sunday, May 19th, 10:30am, Novato

Compost 101

Please join us in welcoming Linda Novy, a local authority on sustainable landscape management. She will explain why & when to use compost and how to make your own.
 Wednesday, June 5th, 6:30pm, Sloat Blvd.
 Saturday, June 8th 10:30am, Miller Ave, Mill Valley
 Sunday, June 9th, 10:30am, Novato



★ HOW TO: *get rid of gophers*

Unfortunately, gophers love to eat garden plants, which is why getting them to vacate your lawn or garden can be so daunting. The key is to start off with aggressive action, especially in the spring and fall when they reproduce. Below are a few tips to try in your anti-gopher efforts, but please be advised; gopher proofing can be challenging.

Exclude/Repel them

- **Bonide Mole Max** (see information at right) is a repellent that utilizes castor oil as a base; castor oil is not poisonous to pets, birds or children. Available in both liquid spray and granular forms, the spray can be used to "move gophers back". Just apply the spray to a gradually larger area, usually directed to where you want the gophers to exit the property.
- For smaller lawns and gardens, 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 1 foot. This works especially well for raised beds. Pre-made gopher cages are useful for plantings, as is the **Smart Pot**, which gophers cannot chew through.

Trap them

Even though trapping is the most time-consuming, the benefit is that you have definitely eliminated the gopher. See our homepage for details on trapping and gopher resistant plants: www.sloatgardens.com

Mole Max gets gophers out!

Bonide Mole Max is part of a collection of products that are made from all natural ingredients. Mole Max will repel moles, voles, gophers, rabbits and skunks. The active ingredient is castor oil. Safe around children, pets and plants.

Mole Max Repellent

- 5 & 10 lb. Granules
- Biodegradable granules
- 1 lb. treats 500 sq. ft. and lasts for 3 months



Mole Max Repellent Ready to Spray

- One quart treats 10,000 sq. ft. and lasts 30 days +

