

Sloat



Garden Center

Locally
owned since
1958!

Gardener's Notebook

Volume 29, No. 3

News, Advice & Special Offers for Bay Area Gardeners

FALL 2015

A fresh herb revolution in your garden

Just about everyone is dipping a toe into growing and using fresh herbs in food and cocktails. And why not? Herbs are easy-to-grow, drought-tolerant, kitchen stand-bys that liven up what we eat and drink. Think cilantro in tomatillo salsa, parsley and chives in herb dip, and sage leaves dipped in egg and crumbs, then sauteed and eaten as "sage chips". Instead of buying herbs at the grocery store, plant up an herb garden with cilantro, parsley (Italian and curly), rosemary, sage, chives, mint and thyme (English, French, lime, or lemon), lemon verbena, oregano, marjoram and chamomile. Need help choosing? Stop by!

Fragrant and sturdy, sage is a type of salvia; the largest genus in the mint

family. Aromatic sage is easy to grow and prolific; place it on a sunny windowsill or in a garden bed and you'll have fresh herbs throughout the year. Culinary sage can grow 1-3 ft tall and wide, so be mindful where it's planted.



sage



Fresh Herb Dip

8 oz soft, fresh goat cheese
3 Tb olive oil
1/4 cup plain yogurt
2 Tb chopped chives
2 Tb chopped Italian parsley
1 Tb chopped cilantro
1 tsp chopped mint
1/2 tsp chopped thyme
1/2 tsp chopped fresh rosemary

Blend goat cheese, oil and yogurt in a food processor/mixing bowl until smooth. If mixed in a processor, transfer to a bowl and then gently mix in all the herbs.

Enjoy this fresh herb dip as a spread on baguette slices, or as a dip for raw vegetables. *Note:* This can be made a few hours before serving and stored in the fridge. Tastes even better the next day.



parsley

Thymes are so versatile and varied; more than fifty varieties are grown for both

culinary or ornamental purposes! Thyme's flavor heightens that of most any food. The thyme most often used in cooking is known as English thyme (a form of *Thymus vulgaris*). Creeping varieties make attractive aromatic, drought-tolerant rock garden or edging plants.



Thyme

Rosemary is an evergreen perennial with edible purple flowers and fragrant needle-like leaves.

Rosemary's myriad forms vary in habit from stiff and upright, to rounded and squat, to dense, mat forming groundcovers. It is hard to resist passing this plant without pinching off a bit of the foliage.

Try using upright rosemary as a skewer for barbecuing meats.



rosemary

www.sloatgardens.com
for more herb recipes

INSIDE: Drought-tolerant shade plants, Sloat soils, DIY succulent containers, Deep watering, 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
9am to 6:30pm

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: 8am to 6:30pm
Sun hours: 8am to 5pm

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

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

www.sloatgardens.com

S l o a t

Garden Center

420 Coloma Street
Sausalito, CA 94965-1428



We'll help you grow the plants you love!

8 SLOAT NOTEBOOK Fall 2015



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

Fall/Winter hours begin Sunday, November 1st
8:30am to 5:30pm, 7 days a week

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On LOCATION in our San Francisco Marina location with Morris Jackson

Morris started at the Sloat Boulevard store 8 years ago, and then moved across town to manage our San Francisco Pierce Street/Marina location. Below Morris answers a few questions about the store.

Q: What makes the Pierce Street (SF) location special?

Most people who live in the neighborhood have about a six block radius in which they roam. We're their local neighborhood garden center. Our customer base is as diverse as our neighborhood; apartment dwellers, homeowners, businesses, professional gardeners, and interior designers. And, we have our regulars; they always brighten our day when they drop by. This is a true neighborhood and we love being a part of it.

Q: Please tell us about your staff. We're just a bunch of plant geeks always checking to see what's growing, blooming, and doing well in the neighborhood. Our interests are varied: California natives, drought-tolerant plants, creating custom planters, and design. We all love helping our guests create a garden or interior space that fulfills their needs and dreams. For most of us, our passion for plants is inherited.



Staff: Claire, Morris, and Andrew

Q: What types of plants do you carry? I do believe that we have the best selection of houseplants in the city. Since we're so small, we try to carry all the basic bedding and nursery plants, but we love to spice it up with the unusual that you can only find at our location. We try to carry plants that we know will do well in our little microclimate. Our selection of succulents is outstanding!

Q: How do you help identify pest and disease issues for customers? Being a gardener and plant geek, I see first-hand what's going on with plants, what grows best, and what pests are a problem. This makes it easier for me to play "plant problem detective" when someone comes in with a photo or leaf showing a problem. It's also easier to recommend a product when I believe in and use it myself.

Q: What is your favorite plant?

Right now it's Dendrobium Nobile, "the bamboo orchid". It has a subtle fragrance, and I like how the flowers cover the bamboo-like stalks. The coconut orchid is another favorite. I love coming into the store in the morning when we have them in...the whole store smells just like coconut.



Dendrobium orchid

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

Stay WaterWise in the shade with these six plants

This year our Garden Guru received a number of questions about how to choose plants for areas that are both dry and shaded. Often plants that thrive in sunlight get leggy and are not as robust growing in shade. Below are 6 WaterWise plants that are well-suited to dry, low-light conditions.



Daphne 'Moonlight Parfait'

This exceptional, new variety with unique, variegated foliage features double-wide, creamy-yellow edged leaves. Rosy-pink flower buds open to white, sweetly fragrant flowers from winter to early spring. Great foundation plant for dappled shade. Beautiful against a wall or near a patio/deck where its fragrance can be appreciated.



Dianella 'Little Becca' - Flax Lily

Luxuriant, green leaves form dense, small, clumps with a versatile, tough-as-nails constitution. Produces spikes of small blue flowers, followed by blue berries. Heat, drought and humidity tolerant. Excellent for filling in sparse plantings or massing.



Western Sword Fern
Polystichum munitum

One of the most robust and reliable ferns, this hardy, North American native offers superb texture with glossy, leathery, toothed foliage. Vigorous clumps are formed of many long fronds; in cool, shady locations up to four feet long. In warmer, arid areas plants are more compact. Thrives with little care when established, keeping up appearances even in hot, dry weather.



Heuchera 'Peach Flambe'

Expect multi-season interest with glowing, bright peach-colored leaves that are infused with flaming red, turning to plum-purple as the weather cools. A superb companion with seasonal garden color from spring to fall. Provides bold texture and color contrast in mixed containers or borders in bright or dappled shade. Evergreen in mild winter climates.



Camellia sasanqua 'Red Yuletide'

This easy-care red camellia, with dark green leaves, will grow eight to ten feet tall and wide. The showy flowers are fragrant and wonderful for cutting. Perfect to use as an espalier, hedge, or privacy screen. Red Yuletide thrives in partial sun (can take full sun on the coast), and regular watering (weekly, or more often in extreme heat), especially during the first growing season in order to establish a deep, extensive, drought-tolerant root system.



Giant Chain Fern
Woodwardia fimbriata

Native from British Columbia to Mexico. Among the largest Western native ferns, this plant can reach 9 ft. tall in wet coastal forests, but is more typically 4-5 ft. tall and 3 ft. wide. The thick, leathery, medium-green fronds stand upright. Use against a shaded wall or woodland garden. Withstands neglect once well established. Can take full sun along the coast. Spreads by woody rhizomes.

Bay Area Gardening Guide: Fall is for planting

Plant

☞ Fall is the best time to plant **foxglove**, **Canterbury bells** and other biennials. Look to plant **cyclamen** once the weather cools. Now is a great time to plant California poppies, wildflowers, groundcovers & sweet peas.

☞ Plant **ornamental grasses**. Grasses require little upkeep and create a beautiful screening effect against the house or fence.

☞ Fall is for planting! Get shrubs, perennials, vines and trees into the ground this month while the soil is still warm. Winter rains will help establish your plants.

☞ Provide an artificial winter by chilling spring bulbs that have a cold requirement for flowering: **Tulips**, **freesia**, **crocus** and **hyacinth** need 4–6 weeks of refrigeration before planting. Violas and pansies make perfect groundcovers for spring bulbs.

☞ **Decorate for fall:** We have ornamental kale, mums, pansies, violas, Iceland poppies, snapdragons, stock and ornamental grasses for waves of autumnal color.

☞ Sow seeds for fall vegetables: radishes, beets, carrots, peas and lettuce. We also carry vegetable transplants.

Fertilize

☞ Top-dress perennial beds, azaleas, camellias, and rhododendrons with **Sloat Forest Mulch Plus**.

☞ Feed spring blooming shrubs with 0-10-10 fertilizer. Feed citrus with **Maxsea**.

Prune/Maintain

☞ Prepare planting beds for winter. Clear weeds and rocks. Add soil amendments.

☞ Divide the roots and rhizomes of perennials such as agapanthus, yarrow and iris.

☞ Lightly prune Japanese maples while still in leaf.

☞ Feed the birds! Don't cut back dead flower stalks; allow rudbeckia, sunflowers, and other flowers with seeds and berries to feed the birds in your neighborhood all winter. It's also time to fill your bird feeders for winter. We carry a wide variety of suet flavors, as well as suet feeders.

Plant mums, ornamental kale, Iceland poppies, snapdragons, stock and ornamental grasses for autumnal color. Violas and pansies make perfect groundcovers for spring blooming bulbs.



WaterWise bulbs for spring color

Tulips, daffodils and Dutch Iris are three bulbs that don't need much water to produce vibrant blooms. Garlic and onion bulbs can be planted now, too. Detailed bulb planting info: www.sloatgardens.com

More colorful, shade friendly plants for fall and beyond



Mahonia 'Soft Caress'

Soft Caress has soft foliage and no sharp points. It does best in part shade to shade, protected from afternoon sun. Grows 3 ft. tall and wide with yellow blooms in spring and fall, followed by blue berries. Drought-tolerant once established and deer-resistant.



Nandina 'Obsession'

Obsession is a Gulfstream type Heavenly Bamboo that grows to 3 ft. tall and wide. It features intense wine-red new foliage (the color varies with levels of sunlight). Makes a light, airy-looking hedge, screen or container plant. Full sun to part-shade.



Enter your pumpkin carving in our **Annual Pumpkin Carving Contest**. See www.sloatgardens.com



Entertaining? We have fabulous plants and pottery to brighten up your home and to welcome guests.

New bags, same awesome soils

Our popular Sloat soils are now available in spiffy new bags. And...now introducing Sloat Organic Compost! Available at all Sloat Garden Center locations.



Introducing our all new Organic Compost. This all-purpose outdoor planting mix will improve soil vitality in all soil types. It is OMRI certified and made with genuine, "no-poo" compost from green waste. Amending garden soil with compost at planting contributes organic matter to soil.

Recommended for all types of vegetables, annuals and perennials.



Sloat Organic Planting Mix is formulated to meet the unique growing conditions found in the San Francisco Bay Area. When mixed with garden soil, the organic materials help to conserve soil moisture, loosen hard soil, and improve soil porosity for better drainage when planting.

Recommended for all types of flowers, ornamentals, trees, shrubs, roses and perennials.



Sloat Potting Soil is a ready-to-use mix for container gardening with added horticultural sand. The sand adds weight to the mix for improved plant anchorage and increased resistance to "pot tipping" from windy or top-heavy conditions.

Recommended for indoors or outdoors when transplanting or repotting flowers, houseplants and ornamentals.



Sloat Organic Potting Soil is our premier formulation for container gardening in the San Francisco Bay Area. Made from the finest ingredients available, it provides good drainage and resistance to compaction. This ready-to-use mix provides plants an ideal medium for plant growth.

Recommended for flowers, vegetables, houseplants and ornamentals in containers, indoors or out.



Orchiata for healthier orchids



Orchid roots are healthier planted with Orchiata. Why? Because the bark stays wet and re-wets better than traditional fir bark.

Orchiata bark is ground and treated with dolomite lime to provide the optimal pH. It is superior and lasts 5 times longer than fir bark. Orchiata is LOVED by our local orchid societies.

"Orchiata is a wonderful alternative to the fir bark we have used for the past 30 years in growing Odontoglossum and Miltonias. The plants have responded well to Orchiata and grown side by side, plants in Orchiata are significantly stronger and greener. We are no longer using fir bark as a growing substrate and strongly recommend Orchiata."

- Tom Perlite,
Golden Gate Orchids
San Francisco



★ HOW TO: control pests

Bonide All Seasons Horticultural oil can be used as a growing season spray, dormant spray (no leaves) or delayed dormant spray (green tip) to control red spider mites, scale, aphids, bud moths, leaf roller, red bug, codling moth, blister mites, galls, whitefly, mealy bugs and their eggs. It also controls powdery mildew. Perfect for organic gardens; especially for use on fruit trees, shrubs, ornamentals, roses, vegetables, etc.

Protect established trees & shrubs.

Support trees and plants this fall and winter by making sure they get the water they need before going dormant

Dear Gardeners,

We've all had to adapt to state imposed water restrictions this spring and summer, and that has meant curtailing or cutting off watering in the garden and landscape. As a result, some larger trees and shrubs in or around lawn areas are beginning to react adversely to the lack of water. This reaction has shown up as burned leaf edges, discoloration of growth tips or early fall color. These trees have adapted to receiving relatively frequent water in previous years and will need occasional deep watering to make it through the drought.

While lawn areas are relatively easy to replace with a drought-tolerant landscape, fifteen to twenty foot tall trees (or taller) will not be replaceable. If you do happen to lose an established tree to the drought, it may take upwards of ten to fifteen years for replacement trees to grow to the height and width of your current ones, requiring much more water over the years than the already established trees need. Losing a tall tree in a landscape will also change the microclimate in the garden. Plants that were growing in the shade of the tree will suffer or die when exposed to full sun. And if they adapt, those plants will need more water to thrive.

Deep root watering is one of the most efficient ways to water established landscape plants and trees. Generally speaking, two or three deep waterings during the summer and early fall is all it takes to keep an established tree healthy, even if it is not receiving the periphery watering it is used to. If you have dramatically changed your watering practices this year, we strongly recommend that you take some time to deep water some or all of your established trees.

Conservation is more about smart and efficient use of water than no-use. The landscapes in our communities support a plethora of wildlife and are crucial to ecosystems.

Thanks for choosing to garden with us.

Dave Stoner, President
Sloat Garden Center
thebuckstopshere@sloatgardens.com



Baby Hippo Water Ring

The Baby Hippo works especially well for shrubs and is perfect for keeping older, valuable and loved garden plants watered in areas that have been taken off regular irrigation. The Baby Hippo reduces the need for surface flooding (the ring empties in about one hour).



Dew Right Tree Watering Bags

This watering bag is designed to ensure that your new trees will survive their crucial first year after being planted. It eliminates the severe water stress new trees endure after transplanting by delivering water directly to their root system. They also help cut down waste by slowly dripping at the roots to prevent water runoff and evaporation.

Soaker Hoses



For mature trees, running a soaker hose around the tree at the drip line helps them before the tree

goes dormant for winter. We carry 50' soaker hoses that can be used for most trees. Note: the hose should be allowed to weep slowly for 2 to 3 hours at a low rate. A good long drink before they go dormant for the winter will help immensely.



The Bushman Rain Barrel provides an easy way to collect, store, and irrigate with the free water running off of your roof. The large 50-gallon capacity barrel has a locking feature for safety, and a sealed system that keeps out mosquitoes, pests and sunlight.

- Quick and easy to install and winterize
- Includes spigot and garden hose adapter
- Includes connection kit for downspout



This fall we will have limited quantities of **Japi Eco Fusion Rain Pots**. These decorative rain barrels hold 30 gallons of water and feature a metal grill to avoid catching insects and leaves. The handy cache pot in front of the screen is ideal for planting succulents or "dropping in" instant color. Stay tuned later this fall.



This year, Fall "clean up" should include keeping your leaves in place so that they can act as mulch to keep soil cool and covered.

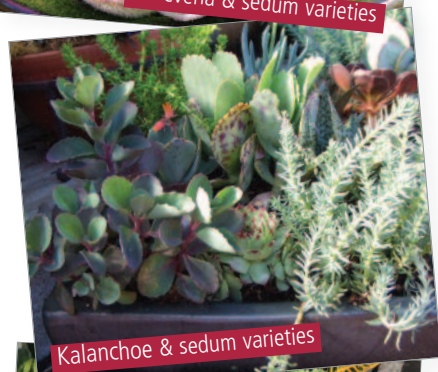
DIY Succulent Container Designs: 3 tips to create your own



Echeveria, sedum and
sempervivum varieties



Echeveria & sedum varieties



Kalanchoe & sedum varieties



Echeveria, senecio
& sedum varieties

How to root succulents

Option 1: Succulent pieces will scab over within a few days after being broken off. Soon after, the plant will start forming roots. Once new roots form, add it to your container.

Option 2: Don't wait for the succulent leaf to scab over; just place it into soil. Most will adapt just fine. Note: If you are creating succulent vertical gardens, they need 3-4 weeks to root in before hanging.

Sloat container designer Jennie Strobel heads up our custom planter program. She creates many of the succulent containers available in our stores. After years of planting up thousands of succulents, Jennie offers a few creative tips for putting together a lovely succulent container.

1. Consider...

Will you plant an accent piece, centerpiece, small container, or teacup?

Answers to these questions will help determine what size, and how many plants to include. See large succulent focal accent plants on pg 7.

Will the container be kept indoors or out? Some plants do better outdoors, and some better in. We find that crassulas, sempervivum, haworthia senecios, and kalanchoe are more adaptable to indoor growing than others.

Does the container have drainage? If not, layering charcoal and gravel at the base will be needed. If you're placing a non-draining pot outside, put it in a location where it won't catch rainwater/sprinkler water.

2. Design ideas

Think about tones. A blue colored pot with blue-toned succulents is a very soothing and peaceful combination. Vibrant designs, such as a white pot with all bright green succulents are eye-catching. You can also mix it up by combining tones to represent many types of green.

Contrast textures. Combine large-leaved succulents with smaller leafed ones. They can complement each other.

Every part of a succulent can regenerate. Jennie likes to break apart sempervivum or sedum, and then spread them throughout the pot, tucking the smaller pieces into small spaces to create a fuller look. See our suggestions (at left) for rooting succulents.

Succulents do not need much root space; Jennie recommends packing them tightly into a pot for a fuller look so that they resemble a bouquet. You can also pick 1-3 succulents per pot for more of a minimal look.

3. Caring for your container

All containers need to be assessed every 4-6 months. If plants are dying, yellowed, diseased, or not thriving, you may need to remove, replace, or prune them back.

Use E.B. Stone Cactus mix and E.B. Stone Sure Start for plantings.



Grow More Cactus Juice Liquid Plant Food provides calcium and other nutrients to cacti and succulents. Mix 1 tsp plant food with 1 gal. water and drench the base of your plants to help keep them healthy.



Succulents do best in part-sun (especially in hot regions).

Succulent accent plants; create a focal point in gardens and containers

Need a large focal point for a WaterWise container or garden? Aloe, aeonium, euphorbia (Firesticks, Ammak or Trigona types), kalanchoe (orgyalis or beharensis) and agave will all do the trick.



Aloe arborescens grows about 10 ft. tall / 6ft. wide. Older clumps may reach 18 ft! Branching stems carry big clumps of gray-green, soft, spike-edged leaves. Winter flowers in long spiky orange-red clusters. Tolerates some shade.



Euphorbia 'Firesticks' is known for its striking silhouette. It grows fast and has trunks that support a tangle of pale to fiery salmon pink stems, and pencil thick succulent branches with tiny leaves on actively growing tips. Full sun!



'Sunburst' Aeonium has large rosettes of variegated green and white leaves edged in bright, coppery red that stand on stalks to 18" tall. Requires full sun (coastal) to bright shade inland, and occasional watering for best color.



Agave is an ubiquitous succulent around California; it has large clumps of fleshy strap-shaped leaves. The flower clusters are big and vibrant. The main clump dies after flowering but pups formed at its edge fill in readily.

FALL gardening seminars

Each season we select local gardening experts and designers, as well as our knowledgeable senior staff, to speak in our seminar series. Free for Rewards Members. \$10 for non-members (membership is 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.

Sloat Design Series: Fall Is For Planting

Learn easy-to-implement design ideas from our Sloat Design experts. They will share their approach to planning, along with design ideas and favorite plant combinations. Plant with confidence!

Sat., Oct. 10 – Novato, 10:30 am (with Jen)
Sat., Oct. 10 – Kentfield, 1 pm (with Jen)
Sun., Oct. 11 – Sloat Blvd., 10:30 am (w/ Gloria)
Sun., Oct. 11 – Danville, 10:30 am (with Dustin)
Sun., Oct. 11 – Miller Ave., 1:30 pm (with Gloria)

Seminar: Bulbs 101

Learn all about planting and designing with spring bulbs from our knowledgeable team. This is a great opportunity to ask questions about spring bulb care and how to design for long-lasting blooms.

Sat., Oct. 17 – Kentfield, 10:30 am (with Greg)
Sat., Oct. 17 – Novato, 10:30 am (with Leo)
Sun., Oct. 18 – Sloat Blvd., 10:30 am (w/ Cindy)
Sun., Oct. 18 – Danville, 10:30 am (with Dustin)
Sun., Oct. 18 – Miller Ave., Mill Valley, 10:30 am (with Dan)

Make & Take Workshop:

Living Pumpkin Planters

Join creative container designer Jen Strobel for a pumpkin crafting bonanza workshop. Create holiday accents (adorable pumpkin planters with succulents and moss!) that can last through Thanksgiving.

Fee: \$30 Rewards Members / \$40 non-members

Wed., Oct. 21 – Sloat Blvd., noon
Thurs., Oct. 22 – Novato, noon
Sat., Oct. 24 – Miller Ave., 10:30 am
Sat., Oct. 24 – Kentfield, 1:30 pm
Sun., Oct. 25 – Danville, 10:30 am (with Dustin Strobel)

Make & Take Workshop:

Wreath Decorating

Weaving tillandsia and succulents into wreaths is a great way to add a living element to holiday greens. Join Jen Strobel and take home a beautiful wreath that you created.

Fee: \$60 Rewards Members / \$70 non-members

Wed., Nov. 18 – Sloat Blvd., noon
Thurs., Nov. 19th – Novato, noon
Fri., Nov. 20 – Miller Ave., Mill Valley, noon
Sun., Nov. 22 – Danville, 10:30 am (Danville staff)
Sun., Nov. 22 – Kentfield, 10:30 am

Why we love the "Digger" glove from Womanswork

WomansWork founder Dorian Winslow created the "Digger glove" after a few insights into how women garden. She discovered that the biggest complaint about women's gloves is that the fingertips break through.

Dorian explored this challenge and discovered that women tend to dig with their hands in the garden more than men, and that creates a need for garden gloves with very strong fingertips, so the Digger glove has double reinforced fingertips.

Also, men's and women's hands are shaped differently, so the fit of the "Digger" gloves is customized for a woman's hands; they tend to be longer and thinner than a man's, and women have less natural padding on their hands than men, so the gloves have light padding on the palm.

Digger gloves are available in bright colors, are machine washable, and colorfast.

