

# Gardener's Notebook

Volume 31, No. 1

News, Advice & Special Offers for Bay Area Gardeners

Early Spring 2017



## Kick off *spring* with colorful foliage

Variegation describes the striping, edging or marking that stands out from a plant's primary leaf color. We're focusing on variegated plants this month with eight specimens that will bring unique tones to your garden. Plant them to add a burst of color (and sometimes flowers) to your landscape or container.



***Aucuba jap. Variegata***

Show stopping, bright-green, glossy foliage speckled with gold is the main feature of this shade loving, mounding, evergreen shrub. *Aucuba* grows (slowly) to 4-8' high and wide. Deep prune annually to encourage bushier growth.



***Azalea 'Bollywood'***

This colorful evergreen shrub forms a compact mound of cream-and-green variegated foliage about 2-3' high and wide. In spring, brilliant magenta trumpet-shaped flowers bloom. Good for containers / small spaces. Attracts butterflies!



***Ceanothus 'Diamond Heights'***

This drought-tolerant evergreen shrub forms a low mound of brilliant chartreuse-and-green foliage 1' tall by 5' wide. In spring, pale blue flowers bloom. Thrives with a little afternoon shade in hot climates. A wonderful container plant!



***Fatsyhedera 'Angyo Star'***

Upright stems feature wide, liquid-amber shaped green leaves with a creamy-white, wide border. The leaves brighten up darker landscapes. Non-invasive roots. Stems need to be staked or supported. Can be grown indoors.



***Alstroemeria Rock & Roll***

A perennial with two-toned foliage and huge clusters of vivid scarlet-orange blooms that are adored by hummingbirds. Compact and clump forming, it thrives in the landscape or patio containers. Stunning in cut-flower arrangements. Grown by Horticultural Craftsmen.



***Camouflage Japanese Aralia***

This handsome shrub illuminates the dappled shade garden with its colorful blend of yellow, lime and deep-green, highly textured foliage. Stays evergreen and very often will bloom from fall to winter, producing showy panicles of white flower clusters. Grown by Horticultural Craftsmen.



***Variegated Box Leaf Azara***

Tiny evergreen leaves with broadly variegated creamy-white edges. Sturdy, arching branches bear clusters of tiny, intensely scented flowers, exuding a white chocolate-like fragrance. This is an outstanding small tree, effortless espalier, or container specimen. Grown by Horticultural Craftsmen.



***Liriope spicata 'Silver Dragon'***

This liriope is a versatile evergreen perennial with dark-green, narrow, grass-like foliage, highlighted by white vertical striping. Pale purple flowers are followed by whitish green berries. Makes an effective accent as a groundcover or edging. Blooms in late summer. Grown by Horticultural Craftsmen.

**Inside:** Azaleas, geraniums, succulent groundcovers, flowering cherries, new seminars, plant your salad, and more



## Now is the time to plant beautiful flowering cherries and plums

The delicate, blossom-adorned branches of ornamental **flowering cherries** and **plums** are synonymous with the welcome arrival of spring. These trees, with their profusion of bright, glossy leaves, are a Bay Area landscape stand-by; they require fast draining, well-aerated soil. Available at all Sloat Garden Center locations this spring.



**Flowering Cherry**

**Prunus 'Yoshino'**  
A deciduous flowering cherry that produces clusters of lightly fragrant double light-pink flowers each spring. Leaves turn yellow in fall. Its small reddish-black fruit is a good bird food source. Tree shape features an oval crown.



**Flowering Cherry**

**Prunus 'Akebono'**

This deciduous tree with a spreading crown reaches 15-20' high and wide. In spring, branches are covered in carpets of double pinkish-white flowers, and in fall, foliage turns a bright golden-yellow.



**Flowering Cherry**

**Prunus 'Kwanzan'**

In spring, branches are covered in clusters of deep-pink double flowers. Fall features golden-yellow foliage. This is a stunning deciduous tree with an upright vase-shaped crown.



**Flowering Plum**

**Prunus 'Krauter Vesuvius'**

This beautiful deciduous tree with deep purple foliage grows 20' tall by 15' wide. Features showy pink flowers each spring, but bears little-to-no fruit.



**Flowering Plum**

**Prunus 'Thundercloud'**

Features unique, deep purple foliage. Grows to 20' high and wide. Branches are covered in showy pink-white blooms. Bears small red fruit that are great for jam.

## Four favorite azalea varieties for every garden

Fancy an azalea this spring? You're in good company. Azaleas are majestic and dependable shrubs for shade gardens. Fortunately, their growing requirements are straight-forward; they need fast-draining, acidic soil that retains moisture and filtered sunlight. Work in liberal amounts of *Sloat Planting Mix* or *E.B. Stone Azalea Rhododendron Camellia Mix* to the soil. Adding *E.B. Stone Sul-Po-Mag* or *F.S.T* will help acidify soil, and provide additional minerals to keep leaves green.



**Azalea 'Happy Days'**

Happy Days is a prolific, blooming, evergreen shrub with large clusters of double violet flowers that appear in mid-spring. Grows 3-5' tall by 4-6' wide.



**Azalea 'Orange Delight'**

This heat-tolerant southern indica hybrid bears trumpet shaped orange-red flowers with red speckled throats from early-to-mid spring. Grows 3-4' high and wide.



**Azalea 'White Lace'**

White Lace is a heat-tolerant southern indica hybrid with trumpet shaped white flowers and light green speckled throats. Blooms early-to-mid spring and grows 4-6' high and wide.



**Azalea 'Girard Hot Shot'**

Girard Hot Shot is an evergreen shrub known for its relatively large flowers and compact growth habit. In mid-spring clusters of orange-red flowers appear. Reaches 2-4' high by 3-5' wide.

## Mediterranean climate plants



The **San Francisco Botanical Garden** is home to an awe-inspiring tapestry of Mediterranean climate plants like *grevillea*, *leucospermum*, and other unique and beautiful protea. The above *grevillea* is just one specimen in their stunning and robust Australian collection. See what you can grow by stopping by this beloved Bay Area garden jewel.

*Mediterranean climate plants (like grevillea leucospermum, and protea) prefer slightly acidic soil conditions, and should be fed fertilizers that are low in phosphorous. We like to use Neem Seed and Cottonseed Meal, two foods that are low in phosphorous and will not harm sensitive plants.*



**Neem Seed Meal** is produced during the extraction of oil from the seed of the Indian Neem tree (*Azadirachta indica*). It is an excellent way to strengthen root systems, improve plant immunity and balance nutrient levels in the soil. Neem Seed Meal can be mixed in to soil or potting mediums, used as a top dress, or steeped to make a potent foliar tea.



**E.B. Stone Cottonseed Meal** is a source of long lasting, natural organic nutrients. Derived from the ground-up seed of the cotton plant, the nutrients in Cottonseed Meal are released slowly; it is non-burning and safe for both new transplants and existing plants. Cottonseed Meal is naturally acidifying in the soil.



### Vibe Ignition purple salvia

This new and exclusive salvia is one for the ages. Vibe Ignition salvia explodes into bloom with vibrant purple flowers emerging from darker buds. It's a petite, prolific bloomer that's notably heat, humidity, and drought-tolerant. Add to summer garden borders, wildlife or cutting gardens, or use as a single plant in pots and / or in mixed containers. Once established it needs just occasional deep watering during extended periods of heat. Height x spread: 18" x 12". *Grown by Horticultural Craftsmen.*

## Spring gardener's glossary

**Perennial:** a non-woody plant that lives for more than two years (and sometimes for many more).

**Annual:** a plant that completes its life cycle in one year or less.

**IPM (Integrated Pest Management):** an ecosystem-based strategy that focuses on long-term prevention of pest damage through a combination of techniques, like biological control, habitat manipulation, modification of cultural practices, and use of resistant varieties. Pesticides are used only after monitoring indicates they're needed.

**Mulch:** the practice of applying organic or inorganic materials to the surface of the soil around plants. Mulches help hold moisture in the soil, and they insulate it from rapid changes of temperature. Mulch prevents weed seedlings from establishing, and it helps prevent erosion. And of course, mulch helps garden beds look tidy.

**Hybrid:** a distinct plant resulting from a cross between two species, subspecies, varieties, cultivars, strains or any combination of the above. Hybrids sometimes occur in the wild, but more often they are produced by plant breeders. In botanical nomenclature, hybrids are indicated with the symbol x, as in *Buddleja x weyeriana*, a cross between the two butterfly bush species *B. Davidii* and *B. globosa*. Note that hybrids are not genetically modified and thus not considered to be a GMO.

## New product alert: simple and easy fertilizing with organic spikes

We like Jobe's organic fertilizer spikes because they are "no fuss, no muss". The pre-measured spikes make for fast, easy, and mess-free fertilizing for a continuous supply of nutrients to active roots. This "in-the-ground" feeding is the most efficient delivery system for organic fertilizers. And the spikes improve long-term soil quality by promoting beneficial microbial growth. Safe for use around children and pets! OMRI listed.

### Jobe's Organics Fruit & Citrus Tree Spikes

For in-ground trees. Pre-measured, time-released organic nutrients feed roots without run-off for healthier plants and higher yields.



### Jobe's Organics Tree, Shrub & Evergreen Spikes

Formulated to provide trees and shrubs with organic nutrients directly at the roots without run-off for nourishment all season.



**Our organically grown tomatoes are in stock and we'll receive new varieties each week. Look for our Tomato Time event in April!**



# Plant your salad.

*Look no further than a raised bed, container or backyard to grow a delicious plate full of fresh greens, herbs, edible flowers and cucumbers. Grow your own groceries this spring!*



**Baby Greens Lettuce Mesclun Organic Seeds**  
Vibrant greens with hints of burgundy, this mild-flavored mix makes the perfect bistro salad.



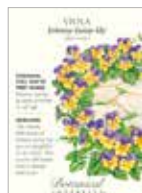
**Basil Viva la Dolce Vita Blend Organic Seeds**  
Live the sweet life of a basil lover with this delightful blend of 7 distinctive varieties. Ideal for containers.



**Nasturtium Fiesta Blend Organic Heirloom Seeds**  
An explosion of fiery-colored edible flowers for borders, containers or color in your vegetable patch.



**Cucumber Straight Eight Organic Heirloom Seeds**  
This very vigorous and productive slicing cucumber introduced in 1935 is excellent for salads and dill pickles.



**Viola Johnny Jump Up Seeds**  
The cheery little faces of Johnny-Jump-Up are as delightful as its name! Edible flowers are a lovely decoration on cakes and salads.

## Rosemary Lemon Garlic Salad Dressing

(4 servings)



1/4 small clove of garlic, minced  
1/2 fresh lemon, squeezed  
1/3 cup olive oil  
1/2 teaspoon fresh rosemary, chopped  
Salt and pepper, to taste

Blend all ingredients by hand or in a food processor, then toss with salad.

## Why we like Down To Earth Vegan Mix Fertilizer

**Down to Earth Vegan Fertilizer Mix** contains essential nutrients derived from plant materials and natural minerals, without animal by-products. Designed to continually nourish vegetables, herbs and flowers throughout the growing season, add **Vegan Mix** in combination with **Sloat Compost** to build soil tilth and improve plant growth, quality and yields.



Dear Garden Guru,

*I have a raised bed for planting vegetables, what soil should I use to fill it with? Also, should I mix anything in?*

- Dawn in Martinez

**Sloat Organic Potting Soil** is your best bet! This signature organic soil has been formulated for Bay Area growing conditions and is specifically intended to help plants succeed in indoor and outdoor containers. It provides excellent drainage and is compaction-resistant, which means it stays loose and offers better air circulation to plant roots. You can use it right out of the bag without mixing.

Also: if you're planting vegetables, don't forget to feed them. We ask a lot of a vegetable plant (or annual flower, for that matter). It will start from a seed, grow to maturity, bear wonderful fruit and then perish, all in one short season. It takes a lot of energy to do that, so feed every 6 to 8 weeks during the season. We like the new **Jobe's Organic Water Soluble Tomato & Vegetable Food**, as well as **E.B. Stone Organics Tomato & Vegetable Food**.



## True geraniums for hardy, colorful, fun in the garden

Need a hardy, low-maintenance, flowering plant that can be planted almost anywhere? Try true geraniums; they'll grow happily in rock gardens, perennial borders, containers, and as groundcovers. Compact and able to spread quickly, true geraniums bloom over a long period of time, bearing show-stopping flowers and foliage. They do prefer some shade, especially in the East Bay. Grow in moist, well-drained soil.



**'Vision Violet' Geranium**

This robust ground cover produces masses of large magenta flowers with purple veins in spring through late summer. Lends a soft edge accent to perennial areas, container plantings and rock gardens.



**'Johnson's Blue' Geranium**

A loose cluster of large, abundant, blue-violet flowers appear continuously from spring to fall above finely cut, divided leaves. Lovely to use in borders, rock gardens and containers. An old favorite in the garden!



**'Biokovo' Geranium**

This vigorous, hardy groundcover is a low maintenance tidy grower. It features fragrant foliage and pretty, white-blushed pale pink flowers late spring through summer. Thrives in cooler Bay Area climates.



## Organic Monterey Complete Disease Control combats powdery mildew

After the winter rains have ended, many plant diseases can proliferate on vegetables, flowers, trees, shrubs and potted plants. One of the most common is powdery mildew; a plant fungus that appears on leaves as white spots or a coating resembling a white/gray dust. To combat it we recommend good air circulation around plants, gardening in quality soil, and using **Monterey Complete Disease Control**. This OMRI listed product provides broad preventative control of fungal and bacterial diseases in foliage and soil. When applied or sprayed, the beneficial bacteria releases enzymes that attach and break down the cell walls and membranes of harmful fungus, thus killing them. Then, the bacteria continues to colonize and protect in the soil and on the leaf surface. *Monterey Complete Disease Control* is safe to use around honeybees, earthworms, natural predators, and pets.



*Powdery Mildew  
photo courtesy of  
UC Davis Good  
Life Garden*

## On Location in Novato with Manager Leo Grassman



*Packed with flowers, trees, and pottery, Sloat Garden Center in Novato is a tranquil garden center. Manager Leo takes time out to answer questions about the store and its staff.*

### What's unique about the Novato location?

Our store feels peaceful and quiet because we back up to a park (Pioneer Park with Mt. Burdell in the distance), which means it has an open feel, plus there's a lot of animal life. The inside of the store is open and airy and has high ceilings with skylights. It's a place that just feels good to be in. We're also really dog friendly...so people come in with their dogs and have time to browse. Something quirky: we have a neighbor who keeps chickens, and sometimes they escape, so we occasionally get to round up chickens and get them home.

### What is the staff's favorite tool and also, the staff favorite plant?

The *Hori Hori Digging Knife*; it's a multi-use use gardening tool. You can dig with it and cut plant roots. Our favorite plant is a Japanese Maple because of the colors, shade, ability to grow in pots, and ability to create bonsai with them.



*Novato staff (L to R standing): Charlie, Leo, Nick, Sierra. Kneeling: Holly with Harvey the dog*

### Tell us about your customers.

We have many long term customers and families, people who have lived in Novato for generations, and they've continued to shop at the store through the years, starting when it was Eggers Nursery (the Novato location joined the Sloat Garden Center family in 1992). We're a huge vegetable destination, gardeners get really excited about the edibles we carry. They'll bring their families and let their kids pick out which vegetables to grow.

### What's your best gardening advice?

Amend the soil before planting, and also, use *E. B. Stone Sure Start*. The better you prepare soil for planting, the more success you'll have. Also, make sure to water regularly until the plant is established, even if it's a WaterWise plant.



## Nine versatile succulents for groundcovers and container plantings

Succulents are garden workhorses, performing especially well as groundcovers, in rock gardens, and for draping over walls and containers. Soft and easily crushed, most succulents will not take kindly to foot traffic, but they are otherwise tough, low-maintenance plants that are interesting and fun to use throughout the garden. Once established, many will naturalize and not require much attention except for occasional summer watering. Sounds good to us!



***Sedum ewersii* 'Pink Mongolian'**

Features upright stems clothed in gray-green leaves. Dense dome-shaped flower clusters appear atop stems. Their long lasting floral display begins late summer to fall; blossoms open purplish pink, age to brownish maroon.



***Delosperma* (Ice plant)**

Ice plant is so showy in full bloom that it is commonly called Pink Carpet. A great ground-cover in any well-drained location. As with many of the ice plants, this one also tolerates seaside conditions.



***Drosanthemum speciosum***

Leaves are covered with glistening dots that look like tiny ice crystals; features typical ice plant flowers with many narrow leaves. Blooms in late-spring or early winter and endures poor soil. The flowers form sheets of blooms that attract bees.



***Sedum spurium* 'Tricolor'**

This heat-tolerant, low-irrigation succulent has a mat-forming habit in landscapes, but cascades in planters and baskets. Small, rounded green leaves are edged in white, tinged with pink. Then, pink blooms appear in summer.



***Aptenia cordifolia***

This South African ice plant relative features trailing stems to 2 ft. long, profusely set with inch-wide, heart-shaped or oval, fleshy bright green leaves. Its bright red flowers bloom in spring and summer.



***Sedum* Dragon's Blood**

A low growing plant with purplish bronze leaves that bear dark-red blooms on trailing stems. Spreads to 2ft +. In summer, pink flowers appear in dense clusters at ends of 4-5 inch stems. Attracts butterflies and beneficials.



***Sedum* Blue Spruce**

A spreading, creeping, drought-tolerant plant. Features narrow light blue-gray leaves that look like needles, closely set on stems. Yellow flowers in summer. Very vigorous.



***Sedum* Cape Blanco**

This CA native has bright blue-gray leaves packed into rosettes on short trailing stems. Light yellow clusters of flowers bloom in spring & summer. Very drought-tolerant.



***Sedum* Pork & Beans**

Sprawling, leaning stems are set with leaves that look like jelly beans; they are green with reddish-brown tips, often entirely bronze-red in the sun. Reddish-yellow spring flowers.

## SPRING gardening seminars



Each season we select local gardening experts and designers, as well as our knowledgeable senior staff, to teach seminars & workshops in our popular gardening education series. Unless otherwise noted, seminars are free for Rewards Members (Workshop fees are additional), and \$10 for non-members (membership is free!). 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.

### Tomato Time Seminar: Learn to Grow Tomatoes

Let's plant tomatoes! Join us for our Tomato Time seminar series, where our experts share tips on what varieties do well in various micro-climates and how to succeed growing them. We'll troubleshoot tips and solutions for the most common tomato challenges.

Saturday, March 25, Concord, 10am (Buzz Bertolero)

Saturday, March 25, Pleasant Hill, 2pm (Buzz Bertolero)

Wednesday, April 5, Danville, Camino, noon (Buzz Bertolero)

Wednesday, April 12, Martinez, noon (Buzz Bertolero)

Wednesday, April 19, Danville Diablo, noon (Alex Friedman)

Wednesday, April 19, Pleasant Hill, noon (Brad Sheehan)

Wednesday, April 19, Concord, noon (Dustin Strobel and Susie Nolte)

Sunday, April 23, Miller Ave, 10am (Dan Alexander)

Saturday, April 8, Novato, 10am (Elizabeth Ruiz)

### Seminar: Small Space Vegetable Gardening

Don't let a small garden space stop you from growing vegetables. Many edibles can be grown in containers successfully. Maximize your space and learn what does well in a small garden or patio. Please join us!

Saturday, April 1, Danville, Diablo, 10am (Alex Friedman)

Sunday, April 2, Pleasant Hill, 10am (Brad Sheehan)

Wednesday, April 5, Sloat Blvd., noon (Jen Strobel)

### Tomato Time Workshop: Create a Tomato Planter

Did you know that you can successfully combine herbs and flowers, along with tomatoes in a planter? Our experts will show you how to create a tomato planter and teach you how companion planting produces great tomatoes. We'll supply soil, fertilizer, plastic 10 gallon bucket, and plants.

Fee: \$35 for Rewards Members, \$45 for non-members

Wednesday, April 12, Kentfield, noon (Jen Strobel)

Wednesday, April 12, Danville, Diablo, noon (Alex Friedman)

Wednesday, April 12, Concord, noon (Dustin Strobel and Susie Nolte)

Wednesday, April 12, Pleasant Hill, noon (Brad Sheehan)

Wednesday, April 19, Sloat Blvd., noon (Jen Strobel)

### Berry Bonanza Seminar: Learn to Grow Berries 101

Learn to grow the berries that are right for your micro-climate. Our experts will teach you how to grow them in containers, care for them, and how to prune. Join us and learn from berry experts.

Saturday, April 1, Martinez, 10am (Buzz Bertolero)

Saturday, April 1, Pleasant Hill, 2pm (Buzz Bertolero)

Saturday, April 1, Miller Ave, 10am (Dan Alexander)

Wednesday, April 5, Kentfield, noon (Elizabeth Ruiz)

Wednesday, April 12, Sloat Blvd, noon (Elizabeth Ruiz)

Saturday, April 8, Concord, 10am (Buzz Bertolero)

Saturday, April 8, Danville Camino, 2pm (Buzz Bertolero)

See [www.sloatgardens.com](http://www.sloatgardens.com) for May and June seminars



## Plant colorful spring annuals now



**Alyssum**



**Lobelia**



**Cosmos**

Annuals provide long lasting color and help feed beneficial insects when pests are absent. We like alyssum, marigold, cosmos, and lobelia for the task. All can be planted in baskets, interspersed in garden beds, or tucked into containers. Color your spring!

## Colorful Lotus Indoor Pottery



This bold, brightly colored indoor pottery will accent any home decor



## Recommendation: Use WaterWise One-Step Complete Tall Fescue

**Pennington One-Step Complete** makes it easy to grow beautiful thick, water-saving grass. We appreciate this super absorbent seeding mix. It contains a combination of premium grass seed, fertilizer and mulch, pre-mixed and ready to use, all in one jug. Apply, water, and watch it grow. Holds and maintains moisture around the seed while providing the essential nutrients needed to grow healthy, thick grass. Grows 80% thicker with half the water than ordinary grass seed during the critical germination period. Also available in larger bags, as well as a sun/shade blend.



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

### San Francisco

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

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

3237 Pierce Street  
Chestnut & Lombard  
(415) 440-1000  
*Hours: 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

### Kentfield (M-F: 8-6:30)

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

### Mill Valley (M-F: 8 to 6:30)

657 E. Blithedale at Lomita  
(415) 388-0102 (near 101)  
401 Miller Ave. at La Goma  
(415) 388-0365 (near dwntn)

### Pleasant Hill

2895 Contra Costa Blvd.  
(925) 939-9000

### Martinez

6740 Alhambra Ave  
(925) 935-9125

### Danville

800 Camino Ramon (in the  
Rose Garden Center)  
(925) 837-9144

828 Diablo Road  
at El Cerro  
(925) 743-0288  
*M-Sat hours: 8am to 6:30pm*  
*Sun hours: 9am to 5pm*

### Concord

1555 Kirker Pass Rd.  
(925) 681-0550

### 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 hours: 8am to 4pm*

*Currently  
available  
in Marin  
& SF only*

Visit us on the web: [www.sloatgardens.com](http://www.sloatgardens.com) Open 7 days per week 8:30am to 6:30pm

(or as noted above)

# S l o a t



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We'll help you grow the plants you love!

8 SLOAT NOTEBOOK Early Spring 2017

## Bay Area Gardening Guide:

## March & April

### Plant

☞ Prepare planting beds for spring. Test soil for pH, nitrogen, phosphorous and potassium, and add appropriate supplements. We recommend amending with **Sloat Loam Builder** or **Sloat Forest Mulch Plus**.

☞ It's vegetable planting time! Grow your own groceries with organic vegetable starts & seeds: lettuce, tomatoes, herbs, zucchini and peppers.

☞ Plant your favorite spring annuals. Petunias, begonias, alyssum, marigolds, cosmos, & lobelia.

☞ We carry plants that will provide flowers and foliage for shaded spaces: choose begonias, heucheras, and Impatiens.

☞ Plant gladiolus and dahlias for summer color.

☞ Choose a large tomato cage now, because your plants will grow larger!

☞ Plant a tree, shrub, flower or edible for Earth Day or Arbor Day.



☞ Rhododendrons and azaleas are budding and blooming. Feed them with **E.B. Stone Organics Azalea Camellia & Gardenia Food** after flowering.



### Fertilize

☞ Stock up on top quality, plant-specific fertilizers: we recommend **E.B. Stone Organics Rose & Flower, Tomato & Vegetable** and **Citrus & Fruit** foods. Use **E.B. Stone Organics Sure Start** fertilizer for new plantings to establish them quickly.

### Prune/Maintain

☞ WaterWise tip: For new plantings, use water-holding polymers such as **Soil Moist**. The non-toxic granules hold water longer than soil alone; minimizing moisture loss to evaporation.

☞ Water early in the morning to prevent wet foliage. Wet foliage attracts snails and fungal diseases. Non-toxic **Sluggo**

helps keep slugs and snails under control.

☞ Stop aphids early with **Bonide Neem Oil, Bonide Rose Rx 3-in-1** or **Monterey Take Down Spray**. Spray at day's end after bees have stopped foraging.

☞ Release ladybugs, praying mantis, and other beneficial insects to help control aphids, mites, whiteflies, and other garden pests.

☞ Use **Sloat MiniBark** or **Forest Mulch Plus** on established and new plantings to reduce moisture loss and keep roots cool while inhibiting weed seed germination.



☞ Spring is the best time to repot houseplants and give them their first feeding.

☞ Prune freeze damaged plants now (if you haven't already). But, you should wait to prune spring blooming shrubs until after flowering.

