

# Gardener's Notebook

Volume 35, No. 3

News & Advice for Bay Area Gardeners

Fall 2021

## Fall is for planting beautiful colorful WaterWise plants

Scan to see the  
WaterWise plants  
suitable for your  
Bay Area garden



**Podocarpus  
Icee Blue**

**Elaeagnus  
pungens  
Variegata**

**Cotinus  
Royal Purple**

**Pittosporum  
Marjorie  
Channon**

**Wise gardeners know** that fall is the best time to plant (or replace) perennials, trees, vines, and shrubs. That's because temperatures are milder in fall, yet the soil is still warm from the summer sun. Plus, anticipated winter rains will help new plants form healthy root systems.

Stop into Sloat Garden Center and find a plentiful supply of WaterWise plants (including California natives) that are already adapted to the Bay Area's Mediterranean climate. Once established, many can survive on rainfall alone.

**In this issue:** now is the second season for growing vegetables • terrariums • winter garden care • pottery • Sloat soils



## How to make a terrarium

Create a lush, plant-filled, living ecosystem that will flourish year-round by planting up a terrarium. They make lovely room or desk companions!

We carry DIY terrarium kits with all the necessary supplies, or make one out of almost any type of container using our à la carte materials.

### 5 steps to create a terrarium

1. Place a layer of stones at the bottom of the container; plus add horticultural charcoal.
2. Add a thin layer of green moss on top of the stones.
3. Place soil on top of the moss.
4. Add plants and any decorative elements.
5. Water gently.



### Terrarium ingredients

- Glass container with or without the lid
- Drainage stones • moss • soil
- Horticultural charcoal
- Small 2" plants. We recommend using tropical plants that love humidity in a closed terrarium. If you'd like to use succulents, the terrarium should be lid-free
- Tools to help plant your terrarium (chopsticks are also handy)
- Decorative shells, toys, sand, and ornaments



**Novato team member Jeff enjoys making terrariums (his creations can be found at the store). We asked him for a few useful tips.**

- A base layer of small rocks is critical since terrariums don't have drainage. Rocks both protect plant roots from too much water, but also create a reservoir of water that can provide needed humidity.

- Select plants with similar light and water requirements. Also, make sure to choose plants that are small enough to fit inside the terrarium as they grow.

- Watering: if you have a succulent-filled open terrarium, let it dry out completely before watering. If you have a terrarium with humidity-loving houseplants, don't let the soil dry out. The soil should be moist but not soggy. Jeff recommends using a spray bottle to mist your terrarium.







## Fall Gardening Webinars

*Each season our skilled team members and local gardening professionals teach webinars in our popular gardening education series. Webinars are free to attend!*

- Make your Garden Nature Compatible
- DIY: Urban Native Plant & Pollinator Habitats
- Fall is for Planting
- Hydrangea Care & Pruning
  - Orchid Basics
  - Beyond Lawns
  - Soil Health Basics
- Succulent Pumpkins
- Becoming an Indoor Plant Parent
  - Indoor Plant Design
  - Gardening for the Birds
- Getting to Know Native Plants
- Secret Season Edible Gardening with Pam Peirce
  - Tillandsias 101
- Terrariums/Living Ornaments

See [sloatgardens.com](https://sloatgardens.com) to join our scheduled Zoom Webinars

## All about Sloat Gardening Webinars

After 40+ years of holding in-person seminars, Sloat Garden Center has expanded to a virtual format. We now offer online classes taught by local gardening experts, including our knowledgeable staff. Webinars cover a wide range of topics from edibles, succulents, and indoor plants, to troubleshooting, pruning, and composting. Our webinars are available and archived for free on our website [sloatgardens.com](https://sloatgardens.com) – or they can be watched live via Zoom.

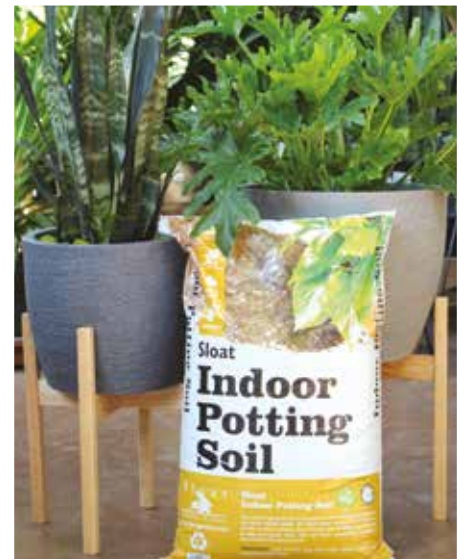
Garden Design Department Manager and Events Coordinator Jen Strobel thinks the migration to online learning has helped support

local horticultural education and made our diverse community of Bay Area home, school and office gardeners feel more connected.

“We’ve had a lot of wonderful feedback on the new format,” explains Jen. “My favorite comment is from someone who felt isolated during quarantine. Webinars were a way for her to be part of a gardening community. Someone else told us they had never attended in-person classes because of mobility issues. They were grateful to take part in classes virtually. We were concerned that going virtual would be less personal, but it can have the opposite effect.”



**Indoor pots galore!** We carry a vast assortment of beautiful indoor pots in many colors, shapes and sizes so you have room to grow the plants you love.



### Sloat Indoor Potting Soil

is blended to provide excellent aeration, drainage, and water retention to help indoor plants thrive. It's ready-to-use right out of the bag. Locally crafted and produced by E.B. Stone Organics in Northern California!



## Plant Food this Fall: it's the Second Season for Vegetable Gardening

**Early fall** is the ideal time to plant cool-season vegetables and herbs; that's because warm soil and abundant sunshine is conducive to growing delicious food. Our stores are stocked in fall with seasonal, locally grown organic vegetable and herb starts like broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, celery, chard, kale, lettuce, onions, garlic, peas, spinach, parsley, and thyme. We also have an excellent selection of herb and vegetable seeds (grow turnips, parsnips, carrots, radishes, beets, and rutabagas by seed!).

*\*\* Gardeners in the East Bay should wait until at least late September to plant broccoli, cabbage, and kale.*



### On the menu Blueberry smoothies & Figs on Pizza

Consider planting permanent edibles in your landscape. Blueberries and figs can work as edible hedges, focal points or screen plants. Also, onion, shallot, and garlic bulbs will soon be in stock.

All can be planted this fall for a tasty harvest!

See our food planting guides and recipes at [sloatgardens.com](http://sloatgardens.com)



### Grow food in a Barrel Planter!

**Deep and roomy** with plenty of space to grow any fruit, herb, or vegetable, we carry repurposed wine barrels at most Sloat locations. We will gladly drill drainage holes before you take them home! Please call ahead for availability!





## Plant up a container filled with leafy greens Kale, Chard, Spinach, and Lettuce

Greens are simple to grow year-round in pots or in the ground. Whether you plant by seed or set out transplants, planting now ensures fresh greens all fall and winter.

Add herbs that thrive in cooler weather to your container: thyme, sage, parsley, oregano, marjoram, and rosemary.

We always fill raised beds and containers with **Sloat Organic Potting Soil**. When amending in-ground gardens we use **Sloat Loam Builder**, along with **E.B. Stone Organics Sure Start** at planting time.



See full food gardening details at [sloatgardens.com](http://sloatgardens.com)

### WaterWise food growing tips:

Add a layer of mulch to retain moisture and limit water needs in your fall garden. Also, use **Soil Moist** to increase water retention.

If you haven't already done so, set up a simple drip irrigation system, or use soaker hoses.

Remember to always water early in the morning to limit evaporation.



Don't forget to feed the food you grow. We recommend **E.B. Stone Organics Tomato & Vegetable Food**. Slow-release organic fertilizers like this are part of a WaterWise gardening program.



## Growing your own groceries starts with healthy soil

Our locally made **Sloat Organic Potting Soil** provides excellent drainage and is compaction-resistant, which means it stays loose and provides air circulation to plant roots. The best part? You can use it right out of the bag without mixing! Combine with our favorite planting fertilizer, **E.B. Stone Organics Sure Start** for a fruitful harvest!

## The best time to plant cool weather vegetables

Cool weather vegetables are most successful if matured when temps are mild and cool. If temperatures are very warm or hot, they'll become bitter and possibly "bolt" (go to seed) rather than produce edible parts.

Cool weather vegetables should be planted in late summer for harvest in fall/winter. Root crops planted in late summer and fall can be overwintered but must be harvested in early spring.

Crop	Sep	Oct	Nov
Broccoli	●		
Cabbage	●		
Carrots	●	●	
Cauliflower	●		
Celery	●		
Chard & Kale	●	●	●
Lettuce	●	●	●
Parsnips	●		
Peas	●	●	
Radishes	●		
Rutabagas	●		
Spinach	●	●	●
Turnips	●		



Scan this code to view our **Food Gardening Guides**.



Turn containers into beautiful, edible gardens by planting them with colorful leafy greens



## We ♥ Pottery

**Sloat Garden Center** has had decades-long close relationships with an extended family of pottery makers from around the world. These potters continue to supply our stores today with colorful glazed and terracotta pots. Take advantage of fall potting weather by discovering our beautiful pottery, available in a range of colors, large and small!



**Dear Garden Guru,**

**Help! My beloved Fiddleleaf fig is covered in aphids...they seem to be thriving there. How can I get rid of these pests? ~ Carmen in Castro Valley**

Hi Carmen: Your best bet is **Neem Oil**, a long-used remedy for controlling soft bodied insects like aphids, mites, thrips, whitefly larvae, and mealybugs. Mix concentrated Neem oil into a spray bottle or obtain a ready-to-use formula and treat the plant weekly until the aphid life-cycle is interrupted. Note: Neem Oil works as a repellent when used regularly in advance of pest infestation. Besides controlling pests, Neem Oil prevents powdery mildew by creating a protective shield on plant foliage (which is also why it's useful as a leaf polish!).



## Eco-friendly at home

**Our Water Our World** is a partnership between city and county-based

water pollution prevention agencies and garden centers that sell pest control products (Sloat Garden Center was a founding member!). OWOW focuses on effective less-toxic, eco-friendly products and techniques because many common pesticides are harmful to sensitive species and ecosystems when they reach creeks, bays, and the ocean.

We work closely with OWOW to train our staff, promote their easy-to-read fact sheets, and teach webinars. Visit [www.owow.org](http://www.owow.org).





## A few moments at our 3rd Avenue, San Francisco location

Nestled on a residential San Francisco street off of Clement, our 3rd Avenue location welcomes gardeners from the Richmond district and beyond. Described by staff members as a beautiful, weird, and quirky spot, the store is the horticultural heart of the neighborhood.

"The most special thing about this store is the sense of community we have," explains Manager Nick. "A large portion of our gardeners live within walking distance and they stop by often."

Assistant Manager Cameron adds to the sentiment: "Richmond gardeners are curious, adventurous, and incredibly diverse. More importantly, they're our neighbors. When you see the same people every week, those neighbors become friends."

While the 3rd Avenue store appears smaller than our other Sloat locations, there's plenty of room for soil, pottery, annuals, perennials, and vegetables. The team sources a variety of unique plants, including houseplants in their indoor plant jungle.



### Cameron shares a few favorite general gardening tips

1. Over-watering accounts for a significant number of plant issues, "too little, too often" being the most egregious. His mantra: "properly saturate, then allow to dry out."
2. Have no fear: "Usually the spots on a leaf, or the little crawly things in your soil are normal! It means your environment is alive, not a sterilized version of nature."
3. Gardening is all about patience. "Emerson said it so well: 'Adopt the pace of Nature; Her secret is patience.'"

## A bit of prevention: Fall & Winter preparation tips for gardens and homes

**1. Use Monterey Liqui-Cop or Bonide Copper Fungicide** to control diseases such as peach leaf curl and **Bonide All Seasons Horticultural Oil** to smother overwintering insects and their eggs.



**2. Control pests.** Stock up on **Terro Ant Baits** for when the weather turns cold and ants decide to come inside. Keep **Pot Poppers** or **Mosquito Bits** in the event that fungus gnats appear around houseplants.



**3. Protect perennials, succulents, and annuals from cold weather.** In advance of a frost/freeze warning, make sure you have **N-Sulate frost blankets** or burlap to help protect tender plants.



**4. Top dress vegetable plants with Sloat Organic Compost** to prevent rain from compacting soil.



**5. Apply Bonide Maize Weed Preventer** liquid corn gluten pre-emergent. It's a safe weed preventer that should be applied in fall. *Remember: weeds steal water from our gardens!*



## Visit our stores: Twelve 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

*Pierce: 9am-6:30pm*

### Novato

2000 Novato Blvd.  
(415) 897-2169

### Kentfield

700 Sir Francis Drake Bl.  
(415) 454-0262

### Mill Valley

657 E. Blithedale  
(415) 388-0102

401 Miller Ave.  
(415) 388-0365

### Pleasant Hill

2895 Contra Costa Blvd.  
(925) 939-9000

### Martinez

6740 Alhambra Ave  
(925) 935-9125

### Concord

1555 Kirker Pass Rd.  
(925) 681-0550

### 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-6:30pm*

*Sun hours: 9am-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 hours: 8am-4pm*

## Open 7 days a week

(see sloatgardens.com for  
location specific hours)

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Visit us on the web: [www.sloatgardens.com](http://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!*

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Printed on 30% PCW recycled  
paper using vegetable-based inks!



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Twitter. Sign up for our  
monthly e-newsletters



### Decorate the porch and contain-

**ers** to catch the flavor of the fall season. We have specialty squash, whimsical pumpkins, and gourds that are perfect for decorating. Looking for a carving pumpkin? Over 20 different varieties will arrive in our stores in late September. These are extra special pumpkins...not just your average supermarket varieties!



### Fall is for planting colorful foliage and flowers.

Stop by your neighborhood Sloat Garden Center this fall: we have ornamental Kale, Mums, Pansies, Violas, Iceland Poppies, Snapdragons, Stock, and ornamental Grasses for waves of autumnal color. California poppies, wildflowers, groundcovers and sweet peas should be planted now, as well as spring bulbs.

To protect the health of our team members and customers, Sloat Garden Center continues to follow local health department and CDC guidelines to lessen the impact and spread of COVID-19. Please check [sloatgardens.com](http://sloatgardens.com) for the most current protocol.



Join our **FREE Gardener's Reward Program** and you'll enjoy:

☐ **Quick rewards:** Receive a \$5 coupon for every 200 points you earn. Each dollar spent earns one (1) point.

☐ **Promotions:** Advance invitations to gardening events by postal mail or email.

☐ **Gardener's Notebook:** FREE subscription to this Gardener's Notebook newsletter and our online monthly and seasonal gardening tips.