

Gardener's Notebook

Volume 17, No. 6

News, Advice & Special Offers for Bay Area Gardeners

December 2003/January 2004

Sloat's 2004 Roses Are Arriving! They're the world's best roses and the easiest to grow!

Our selection of potted roses, including the 2004 Rose of the Year, are scheduled to arrive the second week of December.

Planting dormant roses this winter is an incredibly easy way to enjoy one of the world's most cherished flowers this coming spring and summer.

Growing roses is truly for everyone thanks to new disease-resistant

varieties, products that simplify care, and because planting a rose in a container or in the ground is much like planting any other plant. It's easy.

You'll only need to find a site in your garden that receives full sun for at least six hours (morning sun if possible), amend the soil with **E.B. Stone's Rose Grow Planting Mix**, then plant.

The whole growing process happens rather quickly and is fun to watch. Shortly after planting a rather unattractive collection of roots and canes, you'll notice new growth as your rose bush springs to life. In no time you'll be looking at a plant full of green foliage and hunting for the buds of

your first flowers. The rest is pure pleasure as most roses will begin flowering in spring and keep right on blooming through summer.

Along with our collection of perennial favorites, Sloat will introduce the following new roses from **Jackson & Perkins**, one of the world's premier growers:

Sundance. The Jackson & Perkins Rose of the Year has high-centered, deep golden buds orange. As the

which are edged in orange. As the flowers open, the petals brighten to a brilliant sun-like gold. A vigorous, well-branched bush, featuring dark green foliage.

Honey Perfume. Winner of the Gold Medal in Barcelona and an All-American Rose Selection, this rose is J & P's Floribunda of the Year. Plush apri-



Sundance - 2004 Rose of the Year



Fragrant Keepsake

cot-yellow flowers with an intriguing spicy scent soften in tone to near white. A rapid rebloomer with excellent disease resistance.

Fragrant Keepsake. This new rose has incredibly beautiful coloration and a strong damask perfume. It should be planted near a bench or on your patio where you can admire it often.

Day Breaker. This rose is outstanding in the garden and in the vase! The blooming is nonstop as petite clusters of perfectly formed spiral buds swirl open in warm yellow tones of apricot and pink. Day Breaker is a lush, bushy plant with superb disease resistance.

HERE'S THE MIX FOR PLANTING ROSES



It definitely pays to plant your roses in the proper growing medium and this is it. E.B. Stone Organics Rose Grow is a combination of fir bark, redwood compost, composted chicken manure, earthworm castings and much more. This mix is ideal for containers and in-ground rose growing.

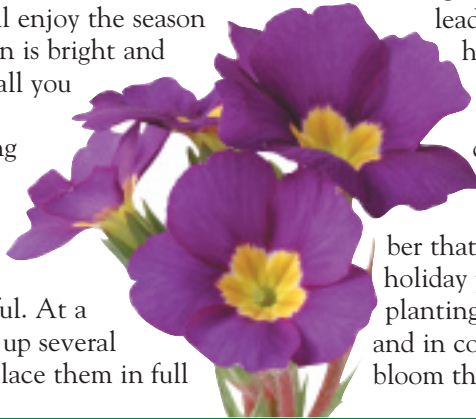
J&P™ roses presented by Jackson & Perkins Wholesale, Inc.

J&P™ roses presented by Jackson & Perkins Wholesale, Inc.

How to avoid a color shortage in your winter garden

Why not make this one of your most colorful winters ever? Just imagine how much more you'll enjoy the season when your garden is bright and cheerful. Here's all you need to do:

Start by picking up a few flats of **violas** and **pan-sies**. Few winter annuals are as colorful and useful. At a minimum, plant up several containers and place them in full



to part sun near your front door or along the walkway leading to your home. Fill your beds and window boxes, too.

Next, remember that **cyclamen** is not just a holiday plant. It is ideal for planting in shady garden beds and in containers. Cyclamen will bloom through winter and on



until warm weather returns.

Cyclamen are very dependable and offer nice green foliage in the off season.

For fragrance and color, add some **stock** to your winter garden. These annuals with an interesting flower form come in a nice variety of colors including pinks, purples, reds and white. Plant them in full sun.

Primrose are a must for all gardens as they are the hardiest of winter performers. They like it cool, moist and shady. Mass them in your beds and fill your containers for super color. Also, use primrose as a cover for your bulbs. (You did plant lots of bulbs, didn't you!!)

These annuals along with **camellias**, **rhododendrons**, and **azaleas** (discussed in recent newsletters) are the answer when it comes to avoiding a color shortage in your winter garden.

Stop by and visit with our knowledgeable staff and we'll be happy to assist you in not only selecting these winter performers, but helping you plan for spring.

A garden design consultation: Fun, valuable, and a great gift!

If you've never had someone who lives and breathes plants over to visit your garden, you owe it to yourself!

Our garden design consultants represent some of our top nursery professionals and therefore have a lot to offer.

For over eight years our design team has helped gardeners with everything from garden makeovers to trouble-shooting pest problems.

Along with being a lot of fun, a consultation can easily pay for itself as not only do homeowners avoid making mistakes that cause plants to die, but each consultation comes with a 10% off card good for an entire year of purchases at Sloat.

To learn more about our services, please contact our Garden Design Department at: (415) 388-3754

Gardening Guide

DECEMBER

Plant

Now's the time to choose from a super selection of dormant roses so you can bank on a beautiful spring and summer rose garden. (See page 1.)



Choose a living or cut Christmas tree and consider Sloat's wonderful collection of holiday plants to decorate your home.

Plant trees now to help them get established. For a mature tree, try one that is "balled-and-burlapped."

Plant winter color now. See ideas listed above.

Fertilize

Feed trees and shrubs that are susceptible to fungal attacks with a fertilizer such as Greenall Wintergreen.

Prune/Maintain

Apply dormant sprays such as Ultra Fine, Cooke Kop-R-Spray and Lilly Miller Polysul to deciduous trees (including fruit), and to shrubs and roses to avoid overwintering of pests and diseases.

Keep garden debris cleaned up to avoid overwintering of plant diseases.



JANUARY

Plant

Great time to select and plant your favorite fruit trees.

Continue planting roses and winter annuals.

Plant berries including blueberries and blackberries.

Fertilize

Top dress roses and other tender plants with Sloat's Forest Mulch Plus to conserve water and help minimize frost damage.



Prune/Maintain

Prune frost-hardy evergreen shrubs and trees. Giving

them the proper shape and size will accommodate new growth and help prevent winter damage.

Cut back your perennials and ornamental grasses.

Continue to clean up winter debris.

Weeds that start with winter rains go to seed in March and April. Pulling weeds now before they go to seed is well

worth the effort and will significantly cut down on their appearance in your garden. Also use a pre-emergent to stop weeds from germinating.

Now is a good time to remove any plants that do not appear to be doing well in your garden. Divide and thin plants that have become overgrown.

How to add a gorgeous tree to your Bay Area garden

As providers of beauty not to mention shade, wind relief, privacy, and other benefits, trees are invaluable garden assets. Understanding how to select a tree and its site can insure future success.

Hundreds of Japanese maples, flowering cherries, birches and other trees are arriving this month at Sloat, in time for the best tree planting opportunity of the year.

“When selecting a site for a tree consider what will be growing under, over and

and beauty of a tree, you could have a problem if you decide to remove them.”

Next, consider the angle of the



This maple, although clearly not an eyesore, had very sharp branch angles from the get go. It would look considerably better if the branch angles were more open.

around the tree in addition to how large it will grow,” recommends arborist Julie

60- degree angle which will provide both interest and tree health. If the angle of the branch attachment (a.k.a. the “crotch”) is too sharp, codominate branching occurs which leads to bark problems and even structural weakness.

Many trees arriving at Sloat this season will be “Balled and Burlapped.” These trees are grown in the ground, then dug out and the root ball is wrapped in burlap.

“The latest thinking in digging holes for trees is to create a bowl shape with sloping sides,” says Gates. When planting she also suggests you not be tempted to trim off branches that often appear just above the soil level.

These low branches actually help feed the growth of the trunk where they connect, according to Gates, and should be left on as long as possible. Branches also carry growth hormones so it follows that pruning should be avoided for at least a year, if not longer.

To learn more about choosing, planting and pruning trees, attend one of Julie Gates’ seminars listed on this page.

Sloat Tip:

A wide variety of fruit trees arrive in January including apple, pear, peach, apricot and others. Nearly any variety of tree can be special ordered as well.



This maple, has good form with open branch angles. It provides a nice entryway canopy for this home and clearly had a good shape from the start.

Gates. Over the last year, Gates has provided some outstanding tree care seminars for Sloat gardeners.

Depending on the type of tree, there are several things to look for when picking one out. Contrary to what you might think, trunk size is not a major consideration. Start by checking for any scarring on both the trunk and the stems of the tree. Avoid any tree with a gash with a depth that is one third or more of the wood’s diameter. Look for broken branches as well.

A common mistake, Gates explains, is thinking that a low branch on the tree will somehow end up growing up and out as the tree matures.

“Out, yes, up, no,” says Gates. Low branches stay low, and if these branches are important to the overall structure

SLOAT SEMINARS

Attendance is limited. Please call ahead to the seminar location to reserve a seat. Seminar fee: \$5. (Gardener’s Reward Program members are free.)

Rose Pruning & Care

What better way to learn how to grow and care for roses than to learn from some of the most experienced and dedicated rose growers in the Bay Area! Join members of the Marin Rose Society (MRS) and S.F. Rose Society (SFRS) at their annual seminars at Sloat. Sloat’s Richard Avery will help East Bay rose gardeners with a special rose pruning and care seminar held in Danville.

Jan. 3 - San Rafael, 10 a.m. - MRS

Jan. 4 - Mill Valley (Miller), 10 a.m. - MRS

Jan. 7 - S.F. (Sloat Blvd.), 5:30 p.m. - SFRS

Jan. 10 - Kentfield, 10 a.m. - MRS

Jan. 24 - Danville, 10 a.m. - Richard Avery

Jan. 24 - Novato, 10 a.m. - MRS

Jan. 25 - S.F. (3rd Ave.), 10 a.m. - SFRS

Jan. 31 - Larkspur, 10 a.m. - MRS

Feb. 8 - Novato, 10 a.m. - MRS

Japanese Maple Pruning & Care

Discover the secrets to pruning and caring for one of the most beautiful trees on the planet with arborist and Japanese maple expert Julie Gates. (See article on this page.)

Jan. 10 - Danville, 10 a.m.

Jan. 17 - Kentfield, 10 a.m.

Jan. 18 - Mill Valley (Miller), 10 a.m.

Lucky Bamboo

Discover the very interesting cultural history of Lucky Bamboo in time for Chinese New Year! Learn how these small plants function like beautiful flower arrangements and bring luck to their owners. Gloria Lee, of Nature Perfect, will speak about Feng Shui and other plants as well.

Jan. 14 - S.F. (Sloat Blvd.), 5:30 p.m.

Growing Beautiful Dahlias

Prized for their colorful flowers, dahlias will make an exciting addition to your Bay Area garden. Dahlia Society member Lou Paradise will guide you on planting and care of these strikingly beautiful perennials.

Jan. 28 - S.F. (Sloat Blvd.), 5:30 p.m.

Indoor Orchids

Join Glen Smith, past president of the Marin Orchid Society, when he discusses successful orchid growing and care as well as techniques for encouraging these wonderful plants to rebloom.

Feb. 1 - Mill Valley (Miller), 10 a.m.

Feb. 4 - S.F. (Sloat Blvd.), 5:30 p.m.

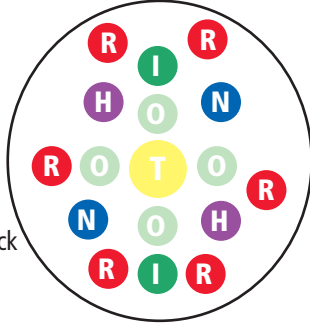
Feb. 7 - Kentfield, 10 a.m.

Sloat's winter container recipe

It's time to fill containers with seasonal plants that love cold weather, but can brighten up your home and garden with their beauty. This recipe features an excellent combination of form and color.

Our winter container recipe is for full sun or part shade. We invite you to change out any plant to meet your own individual taste.

- T** Thuja 'Aurea Nana' - (1) 1 gallon
- N** Nemesia 'Bluebird' - (2) 4 inch
- H** Heuchera 'Palace Purple' - (2) 4 inch
- I** Ivy gold/green variegated - (2) 4 inch
- R** Red Pansy - (1) jumbo pack
- O** Primula obconica white - (1) jumbo pack



Introducing New Pottery Styles and Colors!

Our collection of fine garden pottery is growing. Check our pottery displays and you'll find great new colors, shapes, and styles for both indoor and outdoor use. The values are outstanding as always, and reflect our direct buying relationships with potters around the world!

About this Newsletter: The Gardener's Notebook is published bimonthly 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.

See Our Holiday Decorating and Gift Guide!



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Sunset District
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46th & Sloat Blvd.
566-4415

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453-3977

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Downtown
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Kentfield
700 Sir Francis Drake at
Wolfe Grade
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SLOAT GARDEN CENTER'S

Holiday Decorating and Gift Guide

CYCLAMEN, AZALEAS, TOPIARIES, BROMELIADS, AMARYLLIS AND MORE

Add sensational holiday beauty around your home with Sloat's great selection of holiday plants.

WONDERFUL WREATHS AND GREENS

Fresh from the Sierra and Cascades, Sloat's top quality wreaths, boughs, garlands and swags will decorate

your home's windows, doors, mantels, tabletops and more. Check out our holly, too!

THE FRESHEST TREES

Living Trees: Enjoy a lovely Green or Blue Spruce during the holidays, then keep it in a container for next year or plant it in your garden. Over time you can create a forest

of holiday memories. If you'd like to donate your living tree after the holidays so it can be used for local beautification projects, please ask us for details on how to do it.

Cut Trees: Delivered to us the week they are harvested, our majestic Noble Firs have a beautiful shape with very sturdy branches.

We keep them ultra fresh by placing them in water until you're ready to take them home.

POINSETTIAS IN THEIR PRIME

You won't find better looking or healthier poinsettias anywhere in the Bay Area! These Mexican natives like it warm and moist, so you'll find them being

pampered indoors by our staff (not outside where they can be harmed by cool air). Along with traditional red, you'll find pink, peach, cream and variegated varieties.

HOW TO KEEP YOUR CUT TREE AND HOLIDAY GREENS FRESH

When you bring your tree home, leave it outside. Cut an inch or two off the base of the trunk to open the cells that bring water up to the tree. Hose the tree off completely to remove loose needles and dust. Spray the trunk and needles thoroughly (to the point of dripping) with an anti-

transparent such as Cloud Cover and set the tree in a water stand. Allow the tree to dry for a few hours, then you're ready to decorate and enjoy it.

For holiday greens, coat them with Cloud Cover once or mist with water daily. Keep trees and greens away from hot sunny windows and heat sources.



Green Thumbs Up For These Holiday Gifts

Everything from Heirloom Seeds to Award-winning Roses!



GARDEN TOOLS



BOOKS



GARDENER'S HELPERS



GARDEN DECO



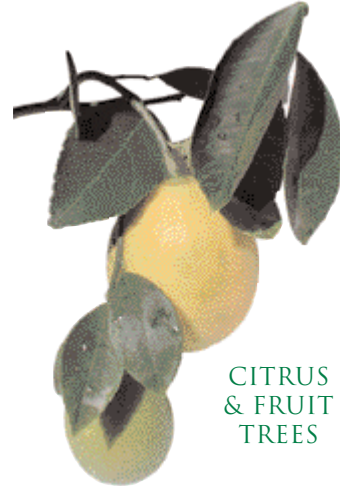
UNIQUE POTTERY

WIND CHIMES



HOLIDAY PLANTERS & PLANTS

WIND SPIRALS



CITRUS & FRUIT TREES



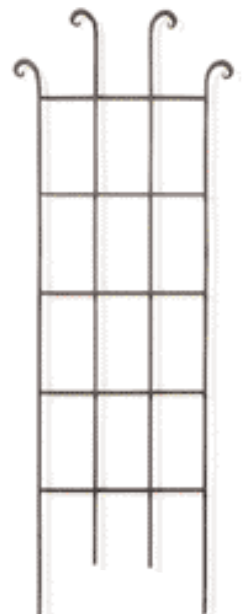
LOTS OF ROSES



PLANTS & POTTERY



FOUNTAINS, BIRDBATHS & BENCHES



TRELLISES

Visit our stores for more gift ideas