



Gardener's Notebook

Volume 19, No. 4

News, Advice & Special Offers for Bay Area Gardeners

July/August 2005

Beautiful Summer Gardens



PLUMERIAS CYMBIDIUM ORCHIDS SUMMER FLOWER GUIDE POTTERY SALE NEW BASKET LINERS

Summer care for cymbidiums helps insure blooms!

Cymbidium orchids grow during spring and summer. During this time, it is important to support this growth by feeding your orchids every other week with a high-nitrogen fertilizer such as **Grow More's Grow Formula** orchid food. Water the plants twice a week and perhaps more often in heat spells.

In August, switch to a low nitrogen fertilizer such as **Grow More's Bloom Formula**, which will



cause the plant to put out shoots and flower spikes. Prop the flower spikes up with bamboo.

Late spring or after the final bloom is a good time to repot your cymbidiums.

Glenn Smith, local orchid expert and Sloat seminar speaker, offers the following re-potting advice.

When a plant gets too large for its container or the growing medium has broken down, cut back the flower spikes

to about an inch high.

Next, knock the plant and roots out of the container and work loose all the potting medium with your fingers.

You can divide the orchid by making sure you have at least three green bulbs and, if possible, a brown bulb in each new plant. Your other option is to place the entire orchid into a larger container.

Place the plant into an empty container and fill it with a new potting medium. Trimming overgrown roots before replanting is not a problem according to Smith.

Glenn Smith will be giving three seminars for Sloat gardeners on repotting. Check the seminar listings on page 7.



Gardening Guide

JULY

Plant

Plant heat-tolerant vegetables such as beans, chard, and cucumbers.

Summer flowers abound. Fill your garden with color that will carry you through until fall. (See page 4.)

Fertilize

Feed vegetables, perennials and annuals with a water-soluble fertilizer such as **E.B. Stone Fish Emulsion** or **Maxsea**. Avoid feeding during the heat of the day.

Prune & Maintain

Support fruit trees to keep branches from breaking.



Mulch all garden beds with **Sloat's Forest Mulch Plus** to protect from summer heat and keep garden maintenance down.

Water lawns deeply and mow grass 1/2" higher than normal to protect against heat and stress.

Leave lawn clippings in place to add nitrogen to the soil.

Cut back perennials that have gone to seed.

Check your sprinkler system to insure coverage during summer's heat.

Shade lettuce and spinach with shade cloth to discourage bolting.

Deadhead flowers to promote additional blooming.

AUGUST

Plant

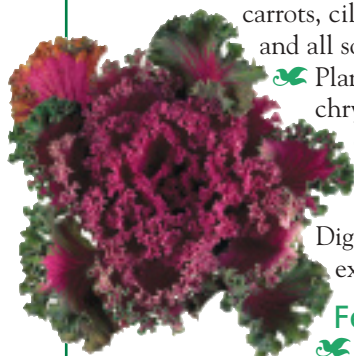
Time to plant fall vegetables (cole crops) including broccoli, kale, chard, cabbage, brussels sprouts, green onions, carrots, cilantro, spinach, and all sorts of lettuce.

Plant fall-blooming chrysanthemums.

Select and plant bearded irises for spring. Dig up and divide existing iris.

Fertilize

Fertilize camellias, azaleas and rhododendrons with



E.B. Stone Organics Azalea, Camellia and Gardenia Food.

Feed vegetables and flowers with a slow-release fertilizer such as **Osmocote**.

Make sure all appropriate vegetables are supported by cages, stakes or trellises to avoid crop loss.

Water early to avoid evaporation. Check soil moisture with great care, especially containers.

Prune & Maintain

Summer prune to keep fruit tree height in check, maintain shape, and eliminate suckers. See article on page 5.

Safe caterpillar control for summer gardens

This time of year most caterpillars are busy eating leaves until they grow to full size and build their cocoons.

If caterpillars are damaging your plants, it is very important that you first identify the caterpillar culprit before you do anything.

You should avoid harming beautiful swallowtail butterflies or any of the other wonderful local pollinators. Try www.whatsthis-caterpillar.co.uk or ask a Sloat professional for some identification help.

One particularly pesky caterpillar is the **budworm**, which preys on petunias, geraniums, snapdragons, nicotiana and other plants. The solution for controlling this pest is **Safer Caterpillar Killer** which contains **Bacillus thuringiensis (Bt)**. The product is designed to be sprayed on leaves. Once the caterpillar eats the treated leaves, the proteins dissolve inside the caterpillar and its digestive tract is paralyzed.

This product is a good choice for controlling caterpillars on the rampage as it will not harm beneficial insects and is nontoxic to humans, other mammals, birds, snakes, and fish.



Plant plumeria for a slice of paradise in your garden

Can you imagine being able to make your own flower leis to greet friends and family when they visit your home?

While the Hawaiians have put sweet smelling plumeria on the map (and around the necks of millions of visitors) the plant is not very well known to northern California gardeners.

Plumeria are native to tropical America where they have been used extensively to landscape temples and other sacred places. Due to their tropical nature, they were first introduced to southern California nurseries and their gardeners.

Plumeria are related to oleanders, but unlike this popular flowering shrub, they are deciduous and grow more like trees. Because they go dormant in winter, they can handle the Bay Area's cool weather and will thrive in our hot, dry summers.

Plumeria are best grown in the ground or in large containers. They require full



sun and well-draining, slightly-acidic soil.

Plumeria are easy to grow and have relatively few disease problems.

According to our grower, the star-shaped flowers come in about 100 colors and color combinations including shades of yellow, pink, orange, red and white.

The fragrance of these flowers is generally off the

others are spicy. The strength of the fragrance will also vary by variety.

Plumeria, like citrus, prefer deep, thorough watering and like to dry out between drinks. During the hot summer months, you'll want to water once a week or once every two weeks.

Plumeria are heavy feeders. Look for a high phosphate fertilizer (middle number) and avoid the high nitrogen formulas that will make the tree leggy.

If you'd like to learn to make a lei, go to www.plumeria101.com/lei.html. There you'll find some inspirational color photos and instructions along with more tips on enjoying this tropical winner in your garden.

Aloha!

charts. Some flowers smell sweet and

Marin Gardening Expertise

Ready to answer any of your gardening questions.



EXPERIENCE

Sloat professional for 9 years

California Certified Nursery Professional

Member of the California Horticultural Society

Studied plant identification at the College of Marin

Comes from a long line of nursery professionals

LAURA'S TIPS FOR GARDENERS

When shopping for plants, keep in mind that during spring and summer our availability changes almost on a daily basis. Our smaller growers who offer some of the most beautiful and unique plants always have something new and exciting for us.

Stopping by just to see what's new will help you draw from a larger pallet of plants for your garden.

During the summer months, it is especially important to water properly. You can set up a watering schedule if the weather is consistent, but plan to make adjustments for cool or extra hot days. It's best to water deeply and less frequently, and not to love your plants to death by overwatering.

NAME

Laura Muschietti

STORE

Manager, Kentfield Store

SPECIAL INTERESTS

Vegetable gardening

Deer resistant landscaping

Shade gardens

Providing superior customer service

Factory Sample Sale! Garden Pottery for 2006

Here's a special opportunity to see and purchase the latest in garden pottery design! Garden centers from around the U.S. and Canada will be visiting our wholesale show prior to this special sale to place factory orders for 2006.

Sale selection will include:

- Pottery from Malaysia, Vietnam, China and Mexico
- New styles and old favorites
- Prototype pots
- One-of-a-kind pieces
- Trendsetting styles and colors

July 10, 11, 12, 13

Sunday thru Thursday

Kentfield store ONLY

700 Sir Francis Drake - 8:30 am to 6:30 pm

Shop early for best selection.
Sample quantities are limited!

Sloat's guide to summer flowers

































































If you can't rattle off a list of the best summer flowers for Bay Area gardens, we sure can!

Spring and summer can be a bit overwhelming for gardeners as there are so many plants to choose from.

We've selected a number of summer flowers and created a handy chart that can help you minimize water use, create a healthy garden by attracting beneficial insects, utilize beautiful native plants, and plant flowers that will reseed. Using the chart is a great starting point to expand your knowledge of summer plants that have many benefits.



	Light	Attracts butterflies and/or other beneficials	California natives	Drought tolerant	Re-seeds
Alyssum	Full sun				
Aster	Full sun				
Abutilon	Full sun/Pt. shade				
Bachelor buttons	Full sun				
Butterfly bush	Full sun/Lt. shade				
California poppy	Full sun				
Coreopsis	Full sun				
Cosmos	Full sun				
Columbine	Full sun/Pt. shade				
Daisy	Full sun				
Dianthus	Full sun				
Echinacea	Light shade				
Foxglove	Full sun				
Impatiens	Full sun				
Lantana	Full sun				
Lavender	Full sun				
Marigold	Full sun				
Morning glory	Full sun				
Nasturtium	Full sun/Lt. shade				
Nicotiana	Full sun/Pt. shade				
Rudbeckia	Full sun				
Salvia	Full sun				
Verbena	Full sun				
Yarrow	Full sun				
Zinnia	Full sun				



Beautiful front row seats for your garden's summer show



Summer is prime time for entertaining and enjoying your garden. With plants in place, you'll need furniture to finish off your outdoor "rooms."

Our 2005 shipment of garden furniture has just arrived and we think you'll find it offers some great styles and values.

Along with our popular **garden benches, chairs, loveseats, and tables**, this year we are importing a **Bistro Set**,

which includes two folding chairs and a folding,



Bistro Set

Our **Adirondack Set** includes the chair, foot rest and small table which is ideal for a drink and good book.

Sloat's outdoor furniture is constructed with a teak-like hardwood call maranti. With occasional oiling, this wood weathers and performs just like teak, and therefore has become extremely popular.

You can expect many years of enjoyment from our garden furniture . . . just like our quality plants.



Adirondack Set

Summer pruning to shape, control and improve your plants

Most gardeners are familiar with pruning in winter when many plants and trees are dormant, but summer pruning can be worthwhile as well.

Summer pruning usually involves removing plant parts that are actively growing. Like dormant pruning, the goal is to shape, train or otherwise control growth.

With fruit trees that produce fruit on new growth, summer pruning involves removing or shortening new growth to keeping tree height manageable for harvesting.

Pruning apple trees in July and August, for example, will not only check the growth and keep the tree-size manageable, but allow additional light penetration to help the fruit to ripen.

Another common summer pruning task is to remove "suckers" from your plants and trees. These are shoots that come from the roots and can be annoying. They will appear in your lawn, reach into pathways, show up between stepping stones and more. If not pruned, they will often become new trees and shrubs.

Suckers, which are more common with shallow rooted trees and plants should be removed as close to the root source as possible. This may require a little digging.

Summer pruning also applies to flowering shrubs which are pruned after the bloom.

Gardeners should always check for tree- and plant-specific pruning information which is readily available in books, on the internet and, of course, from our expert staff.

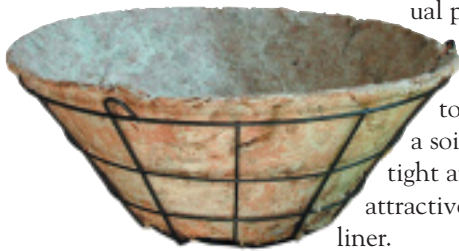
A good lopper is one of the best tools for summer pruning. Its long handle gives you the leverage to make easy cuts and it can reach into the interior of plants and trees. A Bahco Lopper, with its comfortable grip, should be considered. It is extremely well-crafted by a Swedish company that has been building tools for over 130 years.



Introducing Angel Moss liners

Making hanging baskets has never been easier

Making beautiful hanging baskets just got easier. A lot easier! One of the challenges of making a hanging basket is to line the inside of the basket with individual pieces of moss to form a soil-tight and attractive liner.



While not terribly difficult, it does take time and sometimes ongoing adjustments as plants are added to the basket.

Our new **Angel Moss Basket Liners** are already formed into the shape of a basket and fit easily into a variety of basket frames.

An interesting and nice feature of these new liners is that they are designed to be planted dry.

Once the basket is filled with soil and plants, water is added and the compressed Angel Moss expands.

These liners are very absorbent and only require watering about half as often as a basket made with woodland moss or cocoa fiber.

To plant an Angel Moss basket, you simply fill it half way full with potting soil and mix in a slow-release fertilizer like **Osmocote**.

Using your fingers, poke holes in the moss liner through the wire basket and carefully insert the root balls of plants you wish to grow from the sides of the basket.

After completing the sides of the basket, add more potting soil and top plants to finish the basket design. The final step is to water thoroughly.

Our staff says that planting a hanging basket is at least 10 times faster and 10 times easier with these new liners.

Once your basket is complete, follow

these care tips to keep it looking great:

- Water the basket when the top of the potting soil has dried a bit. Gently add water until the water drips from the bottom of the basket.
- Spray the moss to keep it moist.
- Remove dead flowers and damaged leaves to encourage more blooms.
- Fertilize regularly with a liquid product such as **E.B. Stone Fish Emulsion** or **Maxsea Seaweed Fertilizer** to promote new growth.
- Rotate the basket regularly for balanced growth.
- Use annuals and perennials in your basket design. The annuals can be replaced as the season changes to keep you basket looking great.

Our new Angel Moss Basket Liners can be purchased with or without a hanging basket. Typically, liners last about 2-3 years, so

chances are many gardeners will have some baskets at home that need some updating.



SEMINAR ALERT

Plan to attend one of our Angel Moss Basket making demonstrations. For dates and times, see our seminar listing on page 7.

Four care tips for summer lawns

To keep your summer lawn looking like the infield at SBC Park, just employ these four proven care tips:

1. Water to a depth of 3 - 4 inches to encourage deep rooting, but avoid run off which can wash fertilizers and more into our creeks and the San Francisco Bay.

2. Mow no more than 1/3 of the grass height during summer and during heat spells don't cut it at all. Keep your lawnmower blades sharp to avoid grass damage.

3. Fertilize your lawn with a natural fertilizer such as **Ringer Lawn Restore**. This pesticide-free product contains non-burning natural nitrogen. Its slow-release formula releases just the right amount of food to keep your lawn looking fantastic.

4. Dethatch and aerate your lawn which loosens compacted soil and improves air, water and fertilizer penetration. If you feel that your soil needs additional help, rake in about a 1/4 inch of compost or **Sloat Forest Mulch Plus**.

Following these tips will result in a very healthy lawn, which in turn prevents weeds from getting established.

For more information on lawn care, please visit with one of our nursery professionals soon.



Soil Products to Supercharge Your Garden

If you'd like to enjoy the most successful (and easiest) year of gardening ever, make a commitment to getting and keeping your soil in tip-top shape with Sloat Planting Mix, Sloat Loam Builder and Sloat Forest Mulch Plus.

Each of these soil products has been custom blended to amend and improve the dominant soil types found in the San Francisco Bay Area. By using these products, you'll increase plant performance and improve soil structure, moisture retention, aeration and water penetration. These soil products are especially effective in taming heavy clay soils and holding nutrients in your soil.



Only at Sloat Garden Centers

Cornerstone Gardens now serves up lunch along with garden inspiration!

The Market Café is now open at Cornerstone Gardens in Sonoma, where you can shop at Sloat, visit the Gardens, and enjoy a delicious lunch from the Market Café. The cafe offers a seasonal menu of soups, salads and sandwiches, as well as fresh breads, an assortment of award-winning cheeses



and a regional list of world-class wines. A children's menu is also available, with sandwiches starting at just \$3.

Cornerstone Gardens is the place to find something unusual, surprising, inspirational and fun. It has received plenty of great press. Here is what just a few publications have to say:

"Cornerstone Festival of Gardens doesn't fit neatly into any category. It's a combined playground, earthworks, art museum, sculpture garden, outdoor design laboratory, construction site, labor of love and festival where 15 or more walk-through installations, spread over nine acres, show the work of major landscape architects."

HOUSE & GARDEN

"Going through these gardens quickly or at a snail's pace guarantees a rush of the imagination."

SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE

"...whimsical inspiring thought-provoking, beautiful and enigmatic"

MARIN INDEPENDENT JOURNAL



Cornerstone Festival of Gardens presents a playful, interactive and imaginative experience for everyone interested in gardens, garden design and art.

It has also just added a children's garden, so now everyone can be inspired by these unexpected, ever-changing walk-through installations.

The setting also provides an ideal spot for weddings, family gatherings and corporate events.

Entrance fee is \$9 for adults; \$7.50 for seniors 65 and over; \$6.50 for students; and \$3 for children 6-17. Children under the age of 6 are admitted free. The gardens are open daily 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. except Tuesdays, when they are open from 12 noon - 4 p.m.

A \$2 discount off Cornerstone's admission price is available at Sloat's Sonoma store. Just ask our helpful staff.

REWARD MEMBERS:

Watch for In-Store special offers

Are you taking full advantage of our free Gardener's Reward program? Sloat is offering special "members only" pricing on selected plants and gardening supplies!

Special purchases from growers and garden product suppliers along with our own promotional discounts add up to considerable saving for our members.

Just keep a lookout for the in-store signs whenever you visit our garden centers or simply ask a Sloat professional about these special offers.

SLOAT SEMINARS

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

ANGEL MOSS BASKETS

Making hanging baskets has never been easier thanks to Angel Moss. Join basket pro Walt Hagen for a great demonstration.

July 9 - Kentfield, Sat. 10 a.m.

July 17 - Sonoma, Sun. 10 a.m.

Aug. 16 - Mill Valley (E. Blithedale), Tue. 10 a.m.

LADYBUG RELEASE PARTY

Sloat's Dustin Strobel's parties have been a great hit with kids and adults. He will explain how beneficial insects can protect against garden pests and then release thousands of ladybugs. Kids will love it!

July 10 - Mill Valley (Miller Ave.), Sun. 10 a.m.

BATS ARE BEAUTIFUL!

Join Patricia Winters, Educator and Rehabilitation Director of the California Bat Conservation Fund when she introduces these wonderful and important members of our community. Kids will see slides and have a chance to see real bats!

July 13 - S.F. (Sloat Blvd.), Wed. 10 a.m.

GARDEN ART FOR KIDS

If you'd like to teach your kids to appreciate spending time in the garden, let Sloat's Cara Barnard show them how to create cool garden art projects.

July 16 - San Rafael, Sat. 10 a.m.

July 23 - Mill Valley (Miller Ave.), Sat. 10 a.m.

REPOTTING ORCHIDS

Join orchid expert Glenn Smith and learn to repot and care for your orchids. (See article on page 2.)

July 16 - Danville, Sat. 10 a.m.

July 20 - S.F. (Sloat Blvd.), Wed. 6:30 p.m.

Aug. 13 - Sonoma, Sat. 11 a.m.

PRUNING BASICS

Pruning is an essential task. Learn when and how to prune shrubs, trees and other plants with horticulturist Marie Miller.

July 24 - Kentfield, Sun. 10 a.m.

ATTRACTING BIRDS

It is healthy for your garden, good for the environment and beautiful when birds are encouraged to visit your landscape. Learn how to create habitats with Jamie Ray, Director of San Francisco R.O.M.P.'s Habitat Planting Program.

July 24 - San Rafael, Sun. 10 a.m.

Aug. 10 - S.F. (Sloat Blvd.), Wed. 6:30 p.m.

Aug. 14 - Kentfield, Sun. 10 a.m.

Aug. 28 - Mill Valley (Miller Ave.), Sun. 10 a.m.

CONTAINER WATER GARDENS

Join water gardening expert and Sloat professional Dustin Strobel to discover how easy and fun it is to add a water feature to your garden.

Aug. 6 - Mill Valley (Miller Ave.), Sat. 10 a.m.

seminars continue on back page

Ten Locations in San Francisco, Marin, Sonoma & Contra Costa

Richmond District
3rd Avenue between
Geary & Clement
752-1614

Sunset District
2700 Sloat Blvd.
46th & Sloat Blvd.
566-4415

Novato
2000 Novato Blvd. at
Wilson
897-2169

San Rafael
1580 Lincoln Ave.
just off Hwy. 101
453-3977

Mill Valley
657 E. Blithedale at Lomita
388-0102
401 Miller Ave. at La Goma
388-0365

Kentfield
700 Sir Francis Drake Blvd.
at Wolfe Grade
454-0262

Sonoma
23566 Arnold Drive
(707) 939-9400
Hours: 9 am to 6:30 pm

Danville
828 Diablo Road
(925) 743-0288
Hours: Mon.-Sat. 8 - 6:30
Sun. 9 - 5

Garden Design Department
401 Miller, Mill Valley
388-3754

Visit Sloat on the Web: www.sloatgardens.com

Opening this fall on Pierce Street in San Francisco!

Open 7 days a week 8:30 am to 6:30 pm



420 Coloma Street
Sausalito, CA 94965-1428

Printed on
recycled paper



Pre-Sorted
Standard
U.S. Postage
Paid
Intrec

Great plants and great advice to help them grow!

8 SLOAT NOTEBOOK July/August 2005

SLOAT SEMINARS (cont. from page 7)

MEDITERRANEAN PLANTS

Learn to take advantage of our wonderful growing climate by utilizing drought tolerant Mediterranean plants with Sloat's Richard Avery.

Aug. 13 - Danville, Sat. 10:00 a.m.

COOKING WITH HERBS

Learn how to enjoy herbs from the market or fresh from your own garden with Sloat's Dominique White, an ex-restaurateur and chef. She will discuss how and when to add herbs to your creations along with explaining how much fresh or dried herbs to use. She will bring a dish or two to sample and will share some of her favorite recipes!

Aug. 21 - Sonoma, Sun. 11:00 a.m.

BONSAI DEMONSTRATION

Sloat's Daryl Quijano, a member of the Bonsai Society of San Francisco will demonstrate how to get started in this wonderful art form. His seminar will focus on the best way to pot up bonsai plants.

Aug. 24 - S.F. (Sloat Blvd). Wed. 6:30 p.m.

Aug. 27 - San Rafael, Sat. 10:00 a.m.

Fast track a beautiful garden with Sloat's Garden Design Department

One of the best, fastest, and most economical ways to create a beautiful garden is to utilize Sloat's Garden Design Department.

Whether you are an accomplished gardener, a beginner, or anywhere in between, consulting with a professional garden designer can have major benefits.

Typically our design team helps clients plan their gardens by working with them to first access their garden site with respect to sun, shade, wind and other factors. Next, they discuss the style of garden that is desired and develop a simple bubble diagram and/or plant lists.

The team also designs individual garden beds, container plantings, window boxes, hanging baskets and more.

New homeowners often call our design department for help identifying plants and learning how to care for them. We also provide solutions for pests and environmental problems.

Summer is an especially good time to look at our ability to design low-water use gardens.

Along with helping gardeners make good decisions and avoid costly mistakes, Sloat's garden design consultations come with a 10% discount on plants and garden supplies for an entire year.

Our design team has helped over a thousand Bay Area gardeners since we began offering this service in 1996. We look forward to helping you!

If you'd like to learn more about our services and costs and discuss your specific needs, please call us at (415) 388-3754.

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.