

Happy Holidays from all of us at Sloat



Gardener's Notebook

Volume 19, No. 6

News, Advice & Special Offers for Bay Area Gardeners

December 2005/January 2006

Introducing Silver Mountain "Gourmet" Christmas Trees

If you are looking for the ultimate Christmas tree, stop by and consider our selection of **Noble Firs** from our new grower.

The owners of Silver Mountain Christmas Trees claim to offer the freshest, gourmet trees you'll find anywhere.

The Silver Mountain Farm is just east of Salem, Oregon and enjoys ideal conditions for growing noble firs as well as many other trees. The family-run business has farmed in the same location for the last 150 years!

In addition to holiday trees, Silver Mountain Christmas Trees has a conifer nursery where seedlings are produced for state reforestation companies and other Christmas tree growers. This alone sets them apart from the average tree farm and it's no wonder their trees are so superior. The family is particularly proud of its role in helping to replace

forests damaged by fire and logging for future generations.

The Noble Fir is Silver Mountain's pride and joy and the ideal Christmas tree.

Its lush green color, silvery needles, stiff branches and open growth pattern make it the perfect tree for hanging ornaments, (especially larger ornaments that need extra space and additional bough strength). Its beautiful symmetry, rich fragrance and color have made it the preferred Christmas tree throughout the U.S. Silver Mountain trees will be available at all store locations except San Rafael, Miller Avenue and Sonoma. Stop in early for the best selection.

Special Note:

All trees are placed in water and kept ultra-fresh until you are ready to take one home.



'Julia Child' leads the list of exceptional new roses for 2006

The perfect opportunity to introduce beautiful roses to your garden is here again and should not be missed!

Sloat's 2006 selection of potted roses are scheduled to arrive the second week of December. Among our rose collection you'll find some of the most disease resistant, easiest to grow, and beautiful varieties we've ever offered.

These dormant roses are ready to plant in containers or in the ground, and with little effort you'll be enjoying gorgeous blooms this coming spring through next summer.

This year's rose selection comes from **Weeks Roses**, which has produced an incredible 11 **All American Rose**

(continued on page 3)



New forsythia now delivers beautiful flowers and foliage!

As is sometimes the case, a plant that delivers sought after spring flowers falls short when it comes to the foliage that appears before and after the bloom.

Such was the case with forsythia,

a deciduous shrub that is one of the first plants to burst forth with a profusion



of flowers in early spring. Until recently the breeding of forsythia had focused on bud and flower characteristics, but this fall we are excited to offer you a new variety



feet and is best located in full sun to partial shade.

Monrovia nursery is introducing **Forsythia viridissima var. koreana 'Kumson,'** an exciting new variety that offers year-round interest thanks to improvement in the plant's foliage.

'Kumson' offers attractive dark green leaves with distinctive silver venation. The leaves appear prior to the bloom of the plant and are shed in the fall.

The plant grows to about 6 feet by 5 feet and is best located in full sun to partial shade. We invite you to sample this forsythia's beautiful foliage and flowers in late January at our garden centers.

of forsythia with foliage that's equal to the flowers of this popular plant.

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.

Choose an ultra-fresh 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 more

mature tree, try one that is "balled-and-burlapped."

Plant winter color now including cyclamen, pansies, violas, rhododendrons, camellias and primula.

FERTILIZE

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

PRUNE/MAINTAIN

Apply dormant sprays and horticultural oils to deciduous trees (including fruit), and to roses to avoid overwintering pests and diseases.

Winter is a great time to prune and clean up your garden. (Check out our pruning seminars.)

January

PLANT

Sloat's fruit trees arrive at our Novato and Danville stores in January. Select and plant a peach, apricot, apple, pear, cherry or other variety.

Continue planting roses and winter annuals.

Plant berries including blueberries and blackberries.

Rainbow Sorbet

FERTILIZE

Topdress roses and other tender plants with **Sloat Forest Mulch**

Plus to conserve water and help minimize cold 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 weed seeds 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.

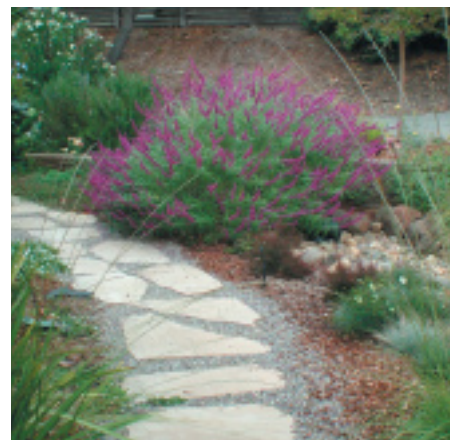


Winter Season: Prime time for garden design

During the fall and winter months, our Garden Design Department is busy helping gardeners in a variety of ways including designing landscapes, preparing planting plans, and troubleshooting problems.

Whether you are considering a garden makeover, bed design or another garden project, utilizing our services now will give you a beneficial jump on spring planting.

In most cases, a member of our design team will visit your home, discuss your landscaping goals and develop a bubble diagram and planting list.



Our design services are not only a huge time saver, but also insure your success by helping you to choose plants that are appropriate for your garden's microclimate.

As a bonus, all Sloat design consultations come with a 10% discount on plants and garden supplies for an entire year.

To learn more about our services and costs, please call us at (415) 388-3754.

Earn double rewards points in the month of January!

. . . exceptional new roses for 2006 (continued from front page)

Selections (AARS) winners including last year's stand-out, About Face.

Just before Julia Child passed away, she selected an exceptional new rose from Weeks to bear her name. This spectacular floribunda rose (pictured on page 1) is one of this year's **AARS winners**.

Julia Child loved the even butter gold color and licorice candy fragrance (is anyone surprised?) of this hybrid with old-fashioned blooms.

As an AARS winner, **Julia Child™** (cv. WEKvossutono) has undergone the most rigorous growing trials and judging anywhere in the world according to **Tom Carruth**, Weeks' director of research and the hybridizer of this amazing rose.

"You don't always know how a new rose will do in these trials," explains Carruth. "The seedlings are evaluated in nationwide trial grounds for a two year period. Just because a rose grows exceptionally well in southern California, doesn't mean you've got a winner on your hands."

Nevertheless, Carruth told us that he knew Julia Child was going to be a winner early on when he saw its perfectly rounded habit, striking flowers and super glossy leaves in his growing fields. He must have known, too that Julia's great disease resistance would help insure a successful trial.

While savoring the Julia Child rose story, you must also consider these equally exciting new introductions from Weeks:

Ebb Tide™ (cv. WEKsmopur) is a remarkably fragrant floribunda with dusky, deep purple buds that swirl open to double old-fashioned flowers of velvet plum.

Like a fine wine, this rose with its intense clove fragrance, will improve over time as it gets established.

Tahitian Sunset™ (cv. JACgodde) is another AARS winner for 2006 and

features blooms of apricot yellow to blushing pink.

This hybrid tea rose has a strong fruit and rose fragrance and its long stems and abundance of flowers make it a garden stand-out.

Rainbow Sorbet™ (cv. BALprez)

is not just a great "dessert rose"

that flows through summer into fall,

but it is also an "appetizer" as it is among the first roses to flower in spring.

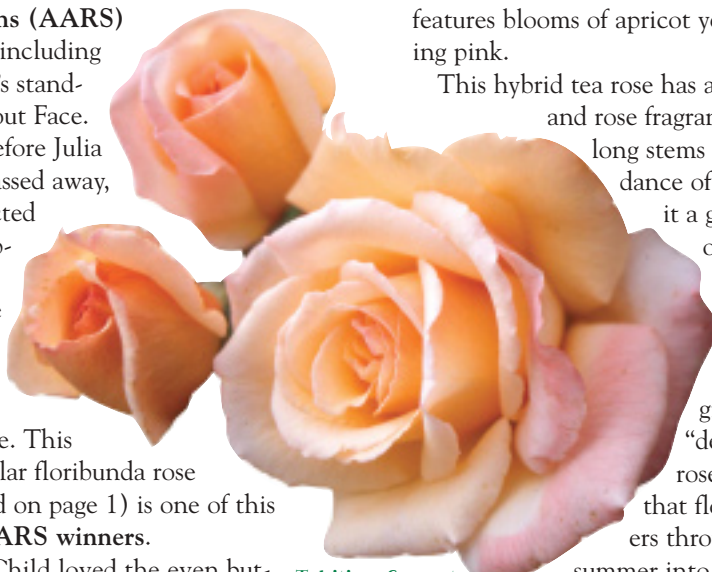
This 2006 AARS winner (pictured in the Gardening Guide on page 2) is a floribunda with flowers that are deep yellow mixed with orange and red. It also offers a light, fresh-cut apple fragrance.

Golden Unicorn. The late Dr. Griffith Buck devoted his life's work to the hybridizing of hardy roses at Iowa State University. Yellow tone roses like Golden

Unicorn that are truly hardy are very rare. Its golden apricot blooms (not pictured) are large and have a mild fruity fragrance.

For help choosing roses for your garden, please ask any of our nursery professionals who will be happy to guide you on selection and care.

Seminar Alert. Plan on attending our rose pruning and care seminars in January and February. See page 4 and the article below for more information.



Tahitian Sunset



Ebb Tide

Local advice for outstanding roses

When it comes to gardening information, the best advice is usually the most localized.

Each year we offer a number of very popular seminars on rose care given by members of the **San Francisco and Marin Rose Societies** as well as some of Sloat's most qualified nursery professionals.

These seminars (see page 4) give our customers the opportunity to benefit from local rose experts who not only have an understanding of the Bay Area's microclimates, but an unparalleled enthusiasm for growing these wonderful shrubs.

Here are just a few tips from **Joan Goff**, **President of the Marin Rose Society** to help you get started with a new rose.

"When roses are harvested, they are pulled from the ground and both the roots and above ground growth are trimmed," says Goff. "This helps to put the roses into a dormant state."

"The bareroot stock is then packed in sawdust or another similar medium to keep the roots moist prior to planting."

Sloat roses arrive potted in containers which actually does a better job of keeping the roots moist and healthy as opposed to traditional bareroot rose packaging. This is especially helpful, according to Goff, if the rose is not planted right away after purchase.

"Sloat roses purchased for immediate planting," according to Goff, "should be treated as bareroot roses. After removing them from their containers, they should be soaked in water for 24 hours."

Next, she advises choosing a planting site that receives about 5 - 7 hours of sun during most of the year.

Good planting advice is available on her society's website (marinrose.org) where there are plenty of helpful links to other sites as well.

As a final note of encouragement to new rose growers, Goff points out that people in other parts of the U.S. grow roses as annuals and only plan to enjoy their roses for one season before the cold destroys them. We've got it pretty good!

Easy holiday decorating with quality plants and greens

If you are ready to decorate your home for the holidays, we can help!

Our stores are decorated with your home in mind and you'll find attractive displays that will inspire you and help simplify your holiday shopping experience.

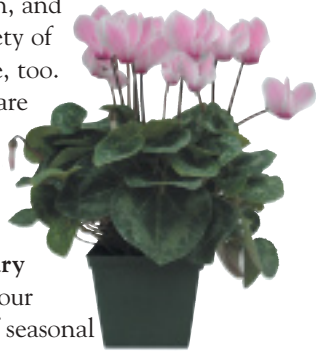
Consider all the great plants we have to offer:

Fresh Wreaths & Greens. Each year we bring in a great selection of wreaths, boughs, garland and swags that you can use to decorate your home's windows, doors, tabletops, mantels and more. The wreaths come decorated with cones and holly or plain, and you'll find a variety of sizes are available, too.

All Sloat greens are fresh from the Sierra and Cascades.

Cyclamen, Amaryllis, Topiary & More. Check our great selection of seasonal plant that will have your home and garden looking great for the holidays and beyond.

Cyclamen, in particular, should be considered a winter garden staple. These easy-to-grow and very dependable plants will continue their show through the winter and on into spring as long as the weather stays cool.



SLOAT TIP: To keep your holiday tree and greens as fresh as possible, spray them with **CloudCover**. This product, which can also be used to help protect outdoor plants from

frost, prevents water from evaporating through leaves and needles.



Perfect Poinsettias. You won't find better looking or healthier poinsettias anywhere in the Bay Area. Expert care is what separates our "points"

from others. Poinsettias are Mexican natives and therefore can be easily harmed by cold drafts. We make a point of keeping our plants out of the cold and watered properly so they look great and last long. Look for traditional red as well as white, pink, and variegated bracts.



Living trees for the holidays and beyond

If you'd like to enjoy a living tree this season and plant it after the holidays, Sloat will be offering beautiful dwarf **Alberta Spruce** trees from **Monrovia** this year.

After the holidays, this superior evergreen tree with its dense conical form has plenty of garden design possibilities. Whether you plant it in the ground or keep it in a pot, consider using it to accent an entry way, incorporate it into your foundation plantings, and combine it with other evergreens in a shrub border. In pots, they are particularly attractive when placed on a porch or patio.

For more holiday and garden design possibilities, please visit with our nursery professionals soon.

MONROVIA
HORTICULTURAL CRAFTSMEN SINCE 1926

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.)

ROSE PRUNING

Learning to prune your roses is key to maintaining their beauty. Join members of the S.F. and Marin Rose Societies, Sloat's CCN Pro Richard Avery and rose specialist Dawn Smith to learn this important skill.

Jan. 7 - Mill Valley (Miller Ave.), MRS Sat., 10 a.m.
Jan. 14 - Kentfield, MRS Sat., 10 a.m.
Jan. 14 - Danville, Avery, Sat., 10 a.m.
Jan. 15 - S.F. (Third Ave.), SFRS Sun., 10 a.m.
Jan. 21 - San Rafael, MRS Sat., 10 a.m.
Jan. 22 - S.F. (Third Ave.), SFRS Sun., 10 a.m.
Jan. 22 - Sonoma, Smith, Sun., 11 a.m.
Jan. 25 - S.F. (Sloat Blvd.), SFRS, Wed., 5:30 p.m.
Jan. 28 - Novato, MRS, Sat., 10 a.m.

JAPANESE MAPLE PRUNING

Arborist Julie Gates will demonstrate pruning techniques for Japanese maples to accentuate their naturally graceful form.

Jan. 15 - Mill Valley (Miller Ave.), Sun., 10 a.m.
Jan. 22 - Kentfield, Sun., 10 a.m.

FRUIT TREE PRUNING

Learn to maximize fruit production and tree health with Arborist Marie Miller.

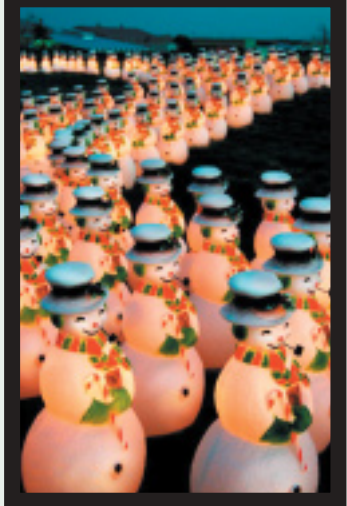
Jan. 8 - Sonoma, Sun., 11 a.m.

CONIFER PRUNING

Arborist Marie Miller explains techniques for pruning these landscape favorites.

Jan. 18 - S.F. (Sloat Blvd.), Wed., 5:30 p.m.

The return of the Snowmen



The holiday display at Cornerstone Gardens that thrilled thousands with hundreds of holiday snowmen, returns for an encore performance on December 2nd.

Call Sloat in Sonoma for your personal invitation to the Snowman lighting event. (707) 939-9400.

SLOAT GARDEN CENTER'S
Holiday Gift Guide

Great news for holiday shoppers! We have expanded our gift selection this year to include some fabulous new gifts for kids and adults. You won't need to check this list twice to find gifts for everyone on your list.



ROSES



BONSAI



GARDEN STATUARY



CITRUS & FRUIT TREES



HATS



BIRD-FEEDERS



RUMFORD TOOL SETS



UNIQUE POTTERY



GLOVES



WIND CHIMES

For Kids

Schylling Tools, Ant Farms, Butterfly Feeders, Root Labs, Bug Lockets, Butterfly Nets, And More!



ORCHIDS & ORCHID POTS



BOOKS



GARDEN HELPERS

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 5 pm

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

Garden Design Department
401 Miller, Mill Valley
388-3754

Visit Sloat on the Web: www.sloatgardens.com

Open 7 days a week 8:30 am to 5:30 pm

Opening this spring in San Bruno!



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Earn double rewards points in the month of January!

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Congratulations to the winners of our Gardener's Reward Drawing. More chances to win in January!

Grand Prize
\$500 Gift Card



GEORGE DOUGLAS
will continue to develop
his North Beach garden
with his prize.

First Prize
\$250 Gift Card



GAIL MASON
chose to donate her prize to Tamalpais High
School and Scott Peterson, representing Sloat,
matched her gift to the school!

Sloat's Gardener's Reward Program has been a huge success and now has nearly 80,000 Bay Area members!

Along with our mid-year Gardener's Reward **Saving Certificate**, we included a chance to win a number of great prizes. We will have a similar drawing this coming January when the next Savings Certificate is mailed to qualified members!

Here's a partial list of recent winners:

Orchid a month for a year - Mary Robert

Felco hand pruners - Karen Travis

Maxsea - Noel Norton, Sally Scully

West County Gloves - Arlene Jech, Lorraine Gotelli, Nancy Corsiglia, Dorothy North, Gwen Perin, Jonathon Crawford, Alice Herwill, Diane Ciccone & Anica Williams

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.