



# Gardener's Notebook

Volume 21, No. 5

News, Advice & Special Offers for Bay Area Gardeners

September 2007

## Fall Planting for Spring: Your guide to bulbs!

You know that feeling...those slight pangs of early garden envy when looking at yards that are bursting with bright daffodils and tulips. That's when you think to yourself, "Oh no, I forgot to plant bulbs last fall!" Well we're here to remind you right now...it's time to add this to your **To Do list!**

Fortunately, planting a spring bulb garden is incredibly easy and virtually foolproof (it's also a terrific gardening activity for kids).

Sloat offers one of the Bay Area's widest selections of bulbs and rhizomes from some of the world's top growers.

### Bulb Design Ideas to the Rescue!

Great bulb displays are child's play, and here are some additional ideas. People will think you're a horticultural genius when they see your spring garden.

1. Mass your bulbs. Go crazy. With bulbs the rule is the more the better - and planting big drifts of bulbs is a surefire way to astound and amaze. Creating rich bands of solid colors is a stunning effect.

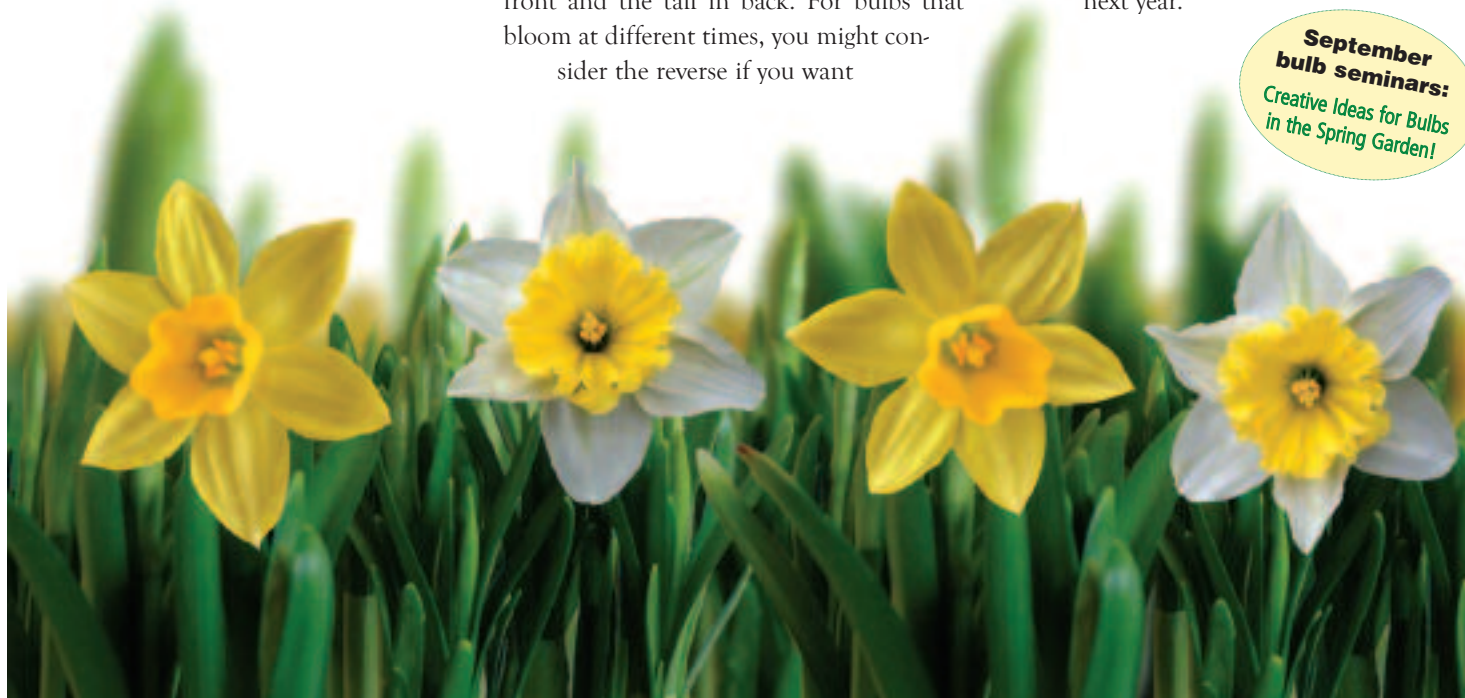
2. For bulbs that bloom at the same time, make sure you plant low-growing varieties in front and the tall in back. For bulbs that bloom at different times, you might consider the reverse if you want

the new bulb growth and blooms to cover the old blooms that are dying back.

3. Try a double-decker effect where smaller bulbs are planted on top of larger bulbs. When they bloom together, you end up with an interesting and beautiful effect. Mix colors that work well together like purple and yellow or red and white.

4. Plant crocus in your lawn . . . you can even spell a name. The only caveat to this cool idea is that you'll need to let the lawn go uncut around the planting until the crocus die back in order for them to return next year.

**September bulb seminars:**  
Creative Ideas for Bulbs in the Spring Garden!



# Ten Locations in San Francisco, Marin, San Mateo and Contra Costa

**Richmond District**  
3rd Avenue between  
Geary & Clement  
(415) 752-1614

**Marina District**  
3237 Pierce Street  
Chestnut & Lombard  
(415) 440-1000

**San Rafael**  
1580 Lincoln Ave. just off  
Hwy. 101  
(415) 453-3977

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

**San Bruno**  
675 El Camino Real  
(650) 869-6000  
3 blocks south of I-380

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

**Novato**  
2000 Novato Blvd. at  
Wilson  
(415) 897-2169

**Mill Valley**  
657 E. Blithedale at Lomita  
(415) 388-0102  
401 Miller Ave. at La Goma  
(415) 388-0365

**Danville**  
828 Diablo Road at El Cerro  
(925) 743-0288

**Garden Design Department**  
401 Miller, Mill Valley  
(415) 388-3754

**Open 7 days a week 8:30 am to 6:30 pm**  
**Visit Sloat on the Web: [www.sloatgardens.com](http://www.sloatgardens.com)**



420 Coloma Street  
Sausalito, CA 94965-1428



Pre-Sorted  
Standard  
U.S. Postage  
Paid  
StrahmCom

Printed on 100%  
PCW recycled  
paper using soy  
based ink!



## Sloat's 2007 Bulb Chart

The following chart shows nearly all of the bulbs, rhizomes and corms Sloat will offer this year along with key planting information.

### FULL SUN

	Bloom	Depth	Height	Colors	Comments
DUTCH IRIS	May thru June	4 in.	22 in.	●●●●●●●●●●	Naturalizer
IXIA MIXED	May thru June	3 in.	18-20 in.	●●●●●●●●●●	Deer resistant, naturalizer
RANUNCULUS	Feb. thru August	2 in.	10 in.	●●●●●●●●●●	Great cut flower
SCILLA	Late winter	2 in.	3-6 in.	●●●●●●●●●●	Deer resistant
SPARAXIS	April thru May	2 in.	12-18 in.	●●●●●●●●●●	Deer resistant
TULIPS	March thru May	6 in.	10-30 in.	●●●●●●●●●●	NEW fragrant varieties
(includes Botanical, Bunchflowering, Single & Double Early, Triumph, Darwin Hybrid, Longstem, Viridiflora, Lilyflowering, Parrot, Fringed and Fragrant)					
WATSONIA	April thru May		4-6 ft.		

### FULL SUN/PART SHADE

ALLIUM	May thru July	Varies	2-5 ft.	●●●●●●●●●●	Deer resistant, naturalizer
ANEMONE	Feb. thru Aug.	2 in.	8 in.	●●●●●●●●●●	Great naturalizer
BEARDED IRIS	May thru Aug.	2 in.	24 in.	●●●●●●●●●●	
CALLA AETHIOPICA	Jan. thru Apr.	4 in.	30 in.		
CAMASSIA	May thru June	2-3 in.	18-36 in.	●●●●●●●●●●	Deer resistant, naturalizer
CROCUS	Feb. thru Apr.	3 in.	5 in.	●●●●●●●●●●	Deer resistant, naturalizer
DAFFODILS	Feb. thru Apr.	5 in.	10-18 in.	●●●●●●●●●●	Deer resistant
FREESIA	Feb. thru Mar.	2 in.	12 in.	●●●●●●●●●●	Deer resistant
FRITILLARIA	Varies	Varies	1-4 ft.	●●●●●●●●●●	Deer resistant, naturalizer
HYACINTH	April	6 in.	9 in.	●●●●●●●●●●	Long-blooming, fragrant
MUSCARI	March thru May	2 in.	4-8 in.	●●●●●●●●●●	Deer resistant, naturalizer
NARCISSUS	Feb. thru Apr.	5 in.	10-18 in.	●●●●●●●●●●	Deer resistant, naturalizer

● purple ● indigo ● blue ● yellow ● orange ● red ● pink ● cream ○ white



Please take a moment to sign up for a Sloat Gardener's Reward membership card online or in our stores.

By presenting your Gardener's Reward card each time you visit Sloat, you'll enjoy in-store specials, savings certificates, our Gardener's Notebook Newsletter, invitations to free seminars and events, as well as invitations to private sales

The Sloat Pottery color for the month of September is...

**AVOCADO**

Visit [www.sloatgardens.com](http://www.sloatgardens.com) for styles & samples.

About this Newsletter: The Gardener's Notebook is published 7x per year 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.

# Fall Bulbs for Spring 2008

*Now in  
stock!*

Let our staff help guide you on how to mix and match bulbs with different bloom times and growing characteristics so that your spring garden will be nothing short of magnificent...



tazetta daffodils



purple hyacinth



atilla tulips



fragrant freesia



dutch iris



ranunculus



small cup daffodil



trumpet daffodil

## Meet our bulb grower!



Ever wonder who grows our lovely bulbs? Small farmer Joop (pronounced Yope) Warmerdam is one such bulb farmer!

Joop farms 9 acres of Tulips and Daffodils in Holland. He started to work for his father in the bulb business in 1965 when he was 15 and took over the family business at age 30.

Joop starts planting bulbs in the middle of October with planting stock and in April when they start to bloom, he starts to take flowers from the blooming bulbs.

Joop cuts off the flowers right after they come into bloom so that the bulb in the ground doesn't start to shrink ~ taking the flowers off makes the bulbs grow bigger.

Digging starts in the middle of June and after which the bulbs are put in temperature controlled rooms to let them dry (at 68 degrees F). After drying, they are shipped in bulk to the bulb exporters who clean the bulbs and package them for shipping to the different stores. They are in the stores ready to sell in early September.

### Don't forget:

*Tulips, freesia, hyacinth and crocus should be chilled 4-6 weeks before planting to encourage stem growth (no one wants a "tulip egg" sitting on the ground!)*

## Bulb Planting 101: The Sloat Guide



### When to Plant

Put your bulbs in the ground or in pots as soon as the weather cools. Once the evening temperatures get into the 50s, you're ready to plant, and plant you must. Bulbs are not seeds, and will not keep. If by chance you discover that you have forgotten to plant some or all of your bulbs, you have nothing to lose by planting them. Nature has a way of making good things happen and chances are you'll get something.

### Where to Plant

Bulbs can be planted just about anywhere in the garden (or in pots!) Most bulbs like full sun, but keep in mind that planting under deciduous trees and shrubs is often an overlooked option. When leaves drop, enough light typically gets through to the bulbs in winter

and early spring for them to bloom. A bit of useful advice offered by the Dutch is "bulbs don't like wet feet." Avoid planting where water collects such as the bottom of a hill.

### Soil Preparation

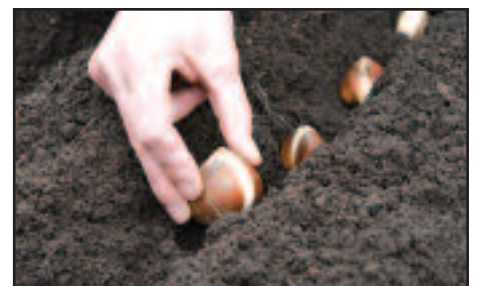
If you are planting in established garden beds, there probably isn't much for you to do. If, however, you are breaking new ground for your bulbs, use **Sloat Forest Mulch Plus** to add organic material to your soil and loosen up the clay that's commonly found in Bay Area gardens.

### Feeding

Bulbs are mini storage tanks and don't need heavy fertilizing. Utilizing a boost such as **EB Stone Organics Bulb and Flower Food** is a great idea especially with naturalizing and perennializing bulbs such as daffodils. The food helps refill the tank after the bloom.

### Point up

Identifying the top and bottom for most bulbs isn't hard. The pointy end goes up in most cases. Planting depth will vary so use our handy chart. While spring bulbs should top everyone's fall planting priority list, putting your spring-blooming perennials in the ground now will result in bigger, better established plants, more beautiful foliage and, of course, more flowers.





# Ready for Fall fun?

We'd like to make a prediction on what the average rake in your garage or shed looks like right now; the tines are breaking off or the handle gives you splinters or some part of it is twisted and bent. Are we close? As your fall clean up tools head back into heavy rotation, it's probably time to replace the most important tool of all – your rake.

A good shrub rake is essential because of the narrow span that makes it ideal for getting around garden shrubs. Our **Corona shrub rake** has double cribs spanning its 8-inch wide sweep. These secure the flexible tines and add great durability.

We carry Corona products because they are high quality, classically designed tools that deliver superior performance. Corona Clipper Inc. began pounding, compressing and flowing hot steel into tools in the 1920s. Years later, the same hand tools are often passed on to the next generation. Corona also makes terrific shovels and hand tools. Stop in and check out our entire Corona line!

**Fall clean up  
Tip #1**

*For plants susceptible to overwintering pests, clean up around them before each spring.*

**Fall clean up  
Tip #2**

*Leave some fallen leaves on the ground when nearby plants are healthy and disease free. Many beneficial insects will be overwintering in fallen leaves, and after trying so hard to attract them, we should not ruin their habitat in the interest of an immaculate garden*



Vibrant **Atlas Nitrile Touch** gloves feature a breathable nylon coating that is completely washable -- these gloves are a must-have for fall clean up.



The **Garden Works Tubrug** is a versatile bendy tote for gardeners. It's incredibly strong and flexible, which makes hauling rocks, leaves and debris or pouring water a breeze. Available in 5 bright colors and 2 sizes (5.5 and 9 gallon).



Top quality garden tools will make planting all your new bulbs simple this Fall. We recommend the **Wilcox Trowel and Wilcox Weeder**. The trowel features a measuring scale on the blade (which is a great way to guarantee bulbs are planted at the correct depth). Both are made of stainless steel and have a comfortable grip handle.

## SEPTEMBER 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.)

*Coming in October/November: Wreath Making, Compost and Front Entrance Seminars!*

### Mosquito Control

The friendly folks from the San Mateo Mosquito Abatement District will be talking about ways to eliminate mosquito problems now and during the rainy season.

**Sept.8**—San Bruno, Sat., 10 am

### Creative Ideas for Bulbs in the Spring Garden

Mary Te Selle, garden designer, shares slides of the fun ways to use bulbs.

**Sept.8**—San Rafael, Sat., 10 am

**Sept.15**—Mill Valley (Miller Ave.), Sat., 10 am

**Sept.22**—Kentfield, Sat., 10 am

**Sept.26**—S.F.(Sloat Blvd.), Wed., 6:30 pm

### Grow Veggies through the Winter

Dinah Sims, award-winning vegetable grower, shows how to have fresh greens during winter.

**Sept.9**—San Rafael, Sun., 10 am

**Sept.23**—Mill Valley (Miller Ave.), Sun., 10 am

### Support the Locals!

Melinda Rose, garden designer, discusses how easy it is to add CA native plants to your landscape and reap the 'green' benefits.

**Sept.12**—S.F. (Sloat Blvd.), Wed., 6:30 pm

**Sept.23**—San Bruno, Sun., 10 am

### Houseplants 101

Helen Winkler, CCN Pro, discusses basic indoor plant care, fertilizing and diagnosing/avoiding common problems.

**Sept.18**—S.F. (Pierce St.), Tues., 6:30 pm