

# Gardener's Notebook

Volume 32, No. 3

News & Advice for Bay Area Gardeners

Fall 2018



Grow easy-care  
*Houseplants*  
year-round



In this issue: Grow leafy greens & herbs • new shade plants • winter shrubs • pottery • indoor plants

## So many vegetables and herbs to choose from this fall



Chard & Parsley



Carrots

Early fall is an ideal time to plant cool season vegetables, herbs and root crops that need warm weather to grow large and leafy before the onset of fall frosts. We offer vegetable and herb plant starts from local growers Upstarts, Sweetwater, and Flatlands. These **organic** vegetable plants are already adapted to our Bay Area climate.

**Leafy greens:** kale, collards, lettuce, mustard, spinach, chard, arugula, mache, endive, bok choy, escarole and sorrel. The simple beauty of planting salad greens is that they're easy to grow year-round in containers and garden beds. There are so many varieties to choose from!

**Root crops:** turnips, rutabagas, radishes, carrots, beets, and onions (plant all from seed).

**Brassicas:** broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage, Brussels sprouts, and kohlrabi. (Note to East Bay gardeners: these vegetables are best planted late September through October as the weather cools).

**Other favorites:** peas, fava beans, leeks, and celery.



Lettuce

## Leafy greens are nutritious and easy to grow



Spinach



Kale

### Delicious salad recipes

Spinach & Kale with Feta Dressing  
 Kale & Pomegranate with Citrus  
 Radicchio, Watercress, and Parmesan  
 Spicy Lime & Cabbage

available in the Sloat Recipe Box  
 at [www.sloatgardens.com](http://www.sloatgardens.com)

**Fall and winter are the seasons when leafy greens** really burst back into the garden and onto our tables. These hardy, cool season vegetables are delicious and exceedingly nutritious with high levels of vitamin C and glutamine.

Brad Sheehan, kale fanatic and manager of our Danville, Diablo Rd. store loves to share his leafy green growing tips. "My favorite is kale; I'm a big fan, just for how easy it is to grow," says Brad. "I like a variety called Blue Curly, which I stir fry and serve over quinoa.

### Brad has two tips for growing leafy greens:

1. Adjust conditions for your micro-climate. This means adding shade cloth in the summer if your garden is too hot, and in the

winter planting greens in direct sun where there's extra warmth.

2. With any planting, start with good soil. "In my home garden, I use **Sloat Organic Compost** and turn it into the soil before I plant," says Brad. "And of course, I use **E.B. Stone Sure Start**. I call it planting insurance."



To treat aphids that unfortunately also enjoy the taste of leafy greens, Brad uses sticky traps and **SNS 209 Rosemary Systemic**.

This organic insecticide is safe for use on all plants, including vegetables.



## Plant savory herbs now to harvest all winter



### Growing rosemary

Rosemary is beautiful, fragrant, extremely drought tolerant once established and gopher/deer resistant. The blossoms also attract birds, butterflies, and bees. Our resident horticulturist Katy uses rosemary as a skewer for roasting vegetables. Tuck rosemary under a bow on gifts, or to make a table place setting more festive.



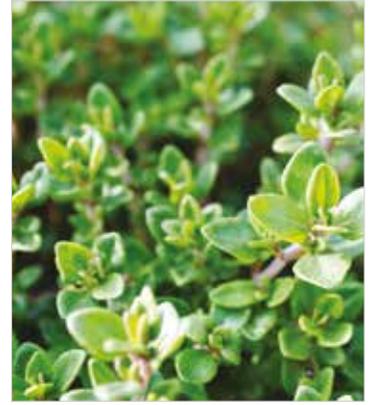
### Growing parsley

This ultra-flavorful herb is a lot more than garnish! Parsley is easy to grow, freshens breath, and likes cool weather, so it's perfect for fall and winter gardening. Chop it up to use in salads, breads, vinaigrettes and soups. It provides interesting texture when grown in mixed vegetable containers.



### Growing sage

Sage is easy to grow and truly prolific; place a container on a sunny windowsill or in a garden bed and you'll be rewarded with fresh sage year-round. Sage can be added to established beds and borders, or in a pot close to the kitchen door. Pinch back sage regularly and enjoy!



### Growing thyme

Thymes are so versatile and varied; they will heighten the flavor of most any food. Lemon Thyme is loved for its lemon scent. Other thymes have aromas of lavender, caraway, orange, and lime. In the landscape, Thyme is drought tolerant, and a beautiful ground cover.

### The best months to plant fall vegetables

Plant these vegetables in early fall to harvest in late fall and winter.

	Oct	Nov	Dec
carrots	●		
cole crops	●		
collard greens	●	●	
herbs	●	●	●
kale & greens	●	●	●
lettuce	●	●	●
onions	●		
peas	●		
radishes	●	●	
spinach	●	●	●

### Steal this planter idea!

Turn fall containers into colorful, edible planters with herbs, flowers and leafy greens. Use chard, red kale, mustard greens, Violas, Pansies, parsley, white Alyssum and Stock. Include herbs like thyme, parsley, sage, rosemary and lavender. 'Bright Lights' chard fits the bill for this fall container idea. Its leaf colors range from green to burgundy, plus the stalks grow in various shades of yellow, orange, pink, red, purple, and green. Note: frost and cool temperatures will not only improve chard's flavor, but it also deepens the color.



### Favorite herb recipes

are available in the Sloat Recipe Box at [www.sloatgardens.com](http://www.sloatgardens.com)  
Crispy Herbed Roasted Potatoes  
Lemon, Parsley & Garlic Persillade  
Rosemary Crackers • Sage Butter



### Grow peas!

There's something special about growing peas. Whether snow peas or snap peas with edible pods, shelling peas or pea sprouts, all are delicious fresh off the vine and so easy to grow. Their shoots and tendrils are also delish!

## Grow more food next spring by following 3 steps this fall



1.

Remineralize soil with **PowerRoc**. A fall application provides minerals that will seep into the soil over the winter so that they're available for the spring growing season. Formulation by Ryan Sigler at our Concord location!



2.

Apply a layer of **Sloat Organic Forest Mulch Plus**. It will break down gradually over the winter to enrich soil and protect it from pounding rain.



3.

Plant **fava beans, buckwheat or crimson clover** as cover crops. They will fix nitrogen in the soil, inhibit weeds and provide tasty food!

## On location with the Mill Valley, East Blithedale store staff

Our Mill Valley, East Blithedale location is a convenient and inspiring plant destination that will spark your imagination and garden creativity. With a wide selection of fresh plants, high-quality garden tools, soils, custom planters, pottery and expert garden advice, this store has a fun and inviting atmosphere...and a whole lot of horticultural expertise!

East Blithedale store Manager Donna Wittman has been with Sloat Garden Center since 2007. She started at the Diablo Ave, Danville store, then became Manager of the Miller Ave, Mill Valley store, and now manages the East Blithedale location. Donna loves offering gardening tips to both experienced and novice gardeners.

"Our best gardening advice is to pay attention to feeding and watering your plant correctly," says Donna. "Feeding your plants at least once per season is good, but giving them plant food once a month is even better. We recommend the wonderful E.B. Stone Organics fertilizers. It's also important to water the right amount for each specific plant and soil. As we like to say: Choose the right plant for the exposure, sun or shade, and don't over-water."



Top left to right: Donna, Sopah, Justin, and Christina. Bottom left to right: Denise, Mike, Steve, and Shelley. Team members not pictured: Victoria, Vicci, Karen, Miles, Katya, Caius, Christian and Aidan.

## Charlie's chalkboard: Grow your own bouquet



Freesia



Snapdragon



Forsythia



Quince

Decorate your home by growing your own bouquets. This simple and sustainable act can add beauty to your space while lessening the carbon footprint of cut flower purchases. Establish winter and early spring flowering plants now for gorgeous blooms in 2019. Charlie, senior horticulturist at our Pleasant Hill location, has some colorful suggestions:

**Snapdragons** are cheery and bright, and one of the easiest annuals to grow. Choose transplants to instantly grace containers and garden beds.

**Narcissus and Daffodil bulbs** are the herald of spring. Easy to grow with little to no care. They bloom from the holidays through to March, depending on the variety.

**Freesias** add perfume to bouquets while becoming permanent fixtures in the garden. The seed heads can be dried and added to flower arrangements. Freesias multiply and spread quickly.

**Stock's** intensely fragrant flowers are available in different shades of pink, purple, white, and maroon. Planted in fall, they will bloom in winter and again in early spring.

**Plant spring flowering shrubs** like Mock Orange, Flowering Quince, Forsythia, Spiraea, and Viburnum (Common Snowball). As the shrub starts to bloom, cut branches for flower arrangements. This pruning will give the shrub new vigor to produce fresh growth next year. If you're looking to grow foliage to complement any flower bouquet, try: Rosemary, Ferns, Purple Hopseed, and most Conifers.

**Amaryllis** bulbs are usually grown as potted plants for the holidays. After blooming, plant the bulb in your garden so that it re-blooms the following summer.



## Grow easy-care indoor plants year-round

### Cascading Succulents indoors

Love succulents? Hang them inside! They'll grace your home with cascading, vines in different shapes and sizes. Some favorites are: String of Pearls, String of Bananas, Fish Hooks (all Senecio), and Sedum Donkey Tail. Another option is Epiphyllum; a tropical Cacti found on tree branches as an Epiphyte. These plants will produce flowers as large as 6" across in a range of colors: white, cream, yellow, pink, rose, and purple.



Sedum Donkey tail

### Modern Snake Plant (Sansevieria)

We can't get enough of this modern looking, undemanding, adaptable, low-maintenance, indoor plant in the Agave family. It will flourish in any type of light and can withstand dry air, fluctuating temperatures, and little water. Most Bay Area Gardeners are familiar with Sansevieria Laurentii, but new cultivars like Cylindrica and Moonshine have really wowed us. Come meet the "new Sansevierias"!



Sanseveria

### Rugged, tropical Philodendron

Philodendron is beloved by our staff for its rugged foliage. "I love Philodendrons because they're an easy-care, air-cleaning, indoor plant," says Cindy Bonilla, houseplant buyer and Assistant Manager at our Sloat Blvd SF location. "Philodendrons come in so many different leaf shapes, colors and sizes; they're all just beautiful!" There are two Philodendron varieties: Arborescent types are shrub sized plants with huge leaves and self-supporting trunks. Excellent in large containers, but they grow so large they need more space than climbing types. *Arborescent types:* Selloum (tree philodendron), Congo red & green, Prince of Orange, Xanadu. *Climbing types.* Varieties: Green heartleaf and Brasil (form of Philodendron cordatum).



Philodendron heartleaf

*Make a pilgrimage to see the giant, 100+ year-old Imperial Philodendron at the San Francisco Conservatory of Flowers. Affectionately known as Phil, this beauty was believed to be acquired in 1901 and is one of the Conservatory's oldest specimens.*



### General Indoor Plant Care

All featured houseplants should live in a room with bright, indirect sunlight. Give them regular water, though let succulents completely dry out before watering. Houseplants prefer rich soil with excellent drainage. Planters should have a drainage hole, and of course a saucer!

## Fall Gardening Seminars & Workshops

*Each season we select gardening experts and designers to teach seminars & workshops in our popular gardening education series. Seminars are free for Rewards Members (Workshop fees are additional), and \$10 for non-members (membership is free). See [www.sloatgardens.com](http://www.sloatgardens.com) for full details, times and locations!*

#### **Seminar: Fall is For Planting**

**Seminar: Emily Murphy, Author of Grow What You Love  
Walk-in Knife Sharpening at Kentfield Sloat Garden Center**

**Seminar: Clean the Air with Houseplants  
Make & Take Workshop: Create a Succulent Pumpkin**

#### **Kids Club Workshop: Make & Take a Pumpkin Craft**

**Seminar: Gardening For The Birds  
Kids Club Workshop: Create a Bird Feeder  
Make & Take Workshop: Create an Entryway Container  
Make & Take Workshop: 4th Annual Create a Succulent Wreath**

## Bring beautiful shrubs to your Bay Area garden



Azalea Bloom-a-thon



Boxwood Sprinter



Double Play Candy Corn Spiraea

Proven Winners brings Bay Area gardeners the most vibrant flowering annuals, perennials and shrubs. Why do we call their finds “Proven Winners”? It’s because of plant performance. Extensive trials and testing ensures their plants are healthy and vigorous, long blooming, disease-resistant, faster growing, and easy to care for. We’re proud to offer the following Boxwood, Spiraea, and Azalea shrubs this fall.

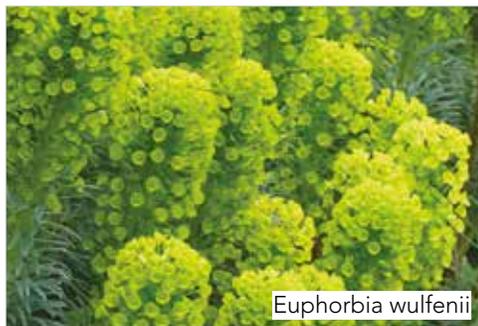
**Boxwood Northstar** is a hardy new Boxwood variety that requires very little pruning to form a low, dense, thick hedge. Its shiny dark-green leaves provide lovely winter color. **Boxwood Sprinter’s** glossy evergreen foliage is attractive year-round. This plant’s pillar-like, upright habit is a good solution for hedging. It’s a fast growing variety that will fill in quickly and work as a privacy screen.

The newest and most colorful Spiraea, **Double Play® Candy Corn®**, features amazing two-season color: Bright, candy apple red new foliage growth gradually matures to pineapple yellow followed by purple flowers. In fall, the foliage turns bright orange to scarlet. This Spiraea is a blissfully low-maintenance, drought-tolerant shrub that naturally takes on a rounded habit without pruning.



Why settle for a week or two of flowers when you can enjoy up to five months of blooms? Large flowers on **Azalea Bloom-A-Thon** appear in April, then it re-blooms in early July and continues through fall. Perfect for containers, as foundation plantings, or in woodland gardens. Available in double pink, hot pink, lavender, red, and white.

## A plethora of Euphorbias for holidays and beyond



Euphorbia wulfenii



Poinsettia



Euphorbia milii

Did you know that Poinsettias are a type of Euphorbia?

Euphorbias are a diverse genus of about 2,000 species indigenous to Mexico. They are uniformly tough, drought tolerant and feature bright colored bracts that are chartreuse, red, pink, yellow and white. Many Euphorbias are succulents that mimic the appearance of Cacti. All are low maintenance and deer resistant.

Euphorbia wulfenii and Euphorbia Ascot Rainbow feature chartreuse bracts and long leaves and foliage ranges from burnt red to green-blue. They’ll seed themselves freely in sun or light shade.

Euphorbia pulcherrima (Poinsettia) has bright colored bracts that are popular holiday decorations. The star-shaped leaf pattern is said to symbolize the Star of Bethlehem.

*Poinsettia care:* water once a week or when soil is dry to the touch. They need at least 6 hours daily of bright, indirect light to thrive. Keep plants away from drafts or direct heat.

Euphorbia Crown of Thorns (Euphorbia milii) makes a beautiful indoor plant. It has small red flowers that look like a mini-poinsettia.

**Grevillea, Leucospermum and Protea** are gorgeous, low-maintenance, Mediterranean climate, native plants. They’re known for their vibrant color; interesting foliage and ability to look beautiful year-round. All prefer slightly acidic soil conditions and to be fed fertilizers low in phosphorous like **Neem Seed Meal**. This fertilizer will strengthen root systems, improve plant immunity and balance nutrient levels in the soil. Neem Seed Meal can be mixed in to soil or potting mediums, used as a top dressing, or steeped to make a potent foliar tea.



### Succulent & Cacti winter care tips

Succulents need protection from the cold, especially when temperatures dip below 40 degrees. We recommend using a frost blanket to keep succulents cozy. Also, since succulents store so much water in their leaves, it’s helpful to water them less in winter. The drying out period makes them less susceptible to freezing during cold snaps.



## Fall is for planting Camellias, Rhododendrons and Azaleas

The key to growing shade loving shrubs is planting them in soil that retains moisture for roots, yet contains enough porosity for good drainage. If your soil needs improvement, work in liberal amounts of *Sloat Organic Planting Mix* or *E.B. Stone Organics Azalea, Camellia & Gardenia mix*. Shade lovers grow close to the surface and so they will benefit from a mulching of *Sloat Micro Bark* or *Sloat Organic Forest Mulch Plus* to keep roots cool and moist.

Sun tolerance varies between species and varieties. Too much sun can cause burning in the center of the leaf, though most can take full sun in cooler, coastal areas. Too much shade can inhibit flowering and cause plants to become "leggy". Look for filtered shade under tall trees, or on the north or east side of a dwelling.

Add a perennial groundcover or two when you plant to support drainage and water retention, protect roots and decrease weeds and erosion. We suggest *Heuchera*, *Campanula*, *Lamium*, *Bacopa*, *Ajuga*, *Campanula* or *Mint* for this purpose.

**MONROVIA**  
Grow Beautifully



A fresh and beautiful new shipment of locally grown Camellias are in our stores now. Feed them now with *EB Stone Organics Ultra Bloom* for bigger and better blooms this spring.

## Generations of pottery experience at Sloat Garden Center

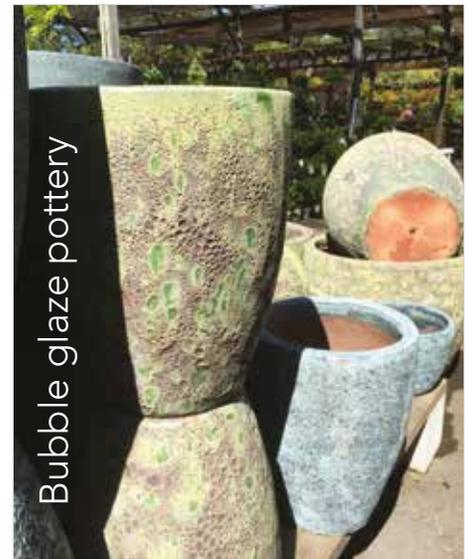


Zack and Dave at a Giants game!

Over the last 40 years, Sloat Garden Center owner Dave Straus and his son Zack have built relationships with pottery makers from around the world. With factories in Malaysia, Vietnam, Brazil and China, this extended family of artisans continue to supply our stores today from connections made decades ago. "We've become close with the pottery makers through the process of design and selection; for us they're old family friends," explains Zack.

Now charged with pottery sourcing for all 13 Sloat Garden Center locations, Zack enjoys the challenge of finding just the right pots for Bay Area gardeners, and also keeping up with changing color trends.

Zack started working in the nurseries when he was 8 and continued as he joined Dave on pottery trips overseas. Zack and Dave frequently tour the nurseries together and discuss pottery. "I get the reassurance of being able to bounce my ideas off the true pottery guru. I'm fortunate for the opportunity to work with and learn from my dad."



Found on Zack and Dave Straus' most recent trip to Vietnam, Bubble Glaze pottery is produced in the same kilns as our other outdoor pottery. The difference is that the clay is pressed into the molds by hand with a technique that allows small air pockets to enter the walls of the pot. When fired, the air bubbles burst through the glaze leaving a beautifully rough finish. The glaze is then ground down to the smoother base and that produces a wide color variation – no two pots are alike! We're always looking for exciting new colors and variations in pottery. We hope you enjoy this new and unique design!



Rudbeckia & Mums

### Fall decorating with plants

The promise of crisp, autumn weather is an invitation to plant up colorful containers and garden beds. Stop in for seasonal plants as we welcome fall, friends, and family to our homes. We've stocked a beautiful array of locally grown flowering annuals and herbs.



## Visit our stores: Thirteen 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

Hours: 9-6:30

### Novato

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

### San Rafael

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

**Kentfield** M-F: 8-6:30

Sat & Sun: 8:30-6:30

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

### Mill Valley

657 E. Blithedale  
(415) 388-0102

401 Miller Ave.  
(415) 388-0365 at La Goma

### Pleasant Hill

2895 Contra Costa Blvd.  
(925) 939-9000

### Martinez

6740 Alhambra Ave  
(925) 935-9125

### E. Blithedale:

M-F 8-6:30

Sat/Sun

8:30-6:30

### 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

### Concord

1555 Kirker Pass Rd.  
(925) 681-0550

### 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

Currently available in Marin & SF only

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

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

(or as noted above)

Fall/Winter hours begin November 4th

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

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8 SLOAT NOTEBOOK Fall 2018

## Bay Area Gardening Guide:

## FALL

### Plant

☞ Fall is for planting! Now is the best time to plant, foxglove, Canterbury bells and other biennials, as well as cyclamen. Also, California poppies, wildflowers, groundcovers and sweet peas should be planted now.

☞ Get shrubs, perennials, vines and trees in the ground this month while the soil is still warm. Winter rains will help establish your plants.

☞ Plant daffodils for vibrant spring blooms. Garlic and onion bulbs can be planted now, too. Detailed bulb planting info: [www.sloatgardens.com](http://www.sloatgardens.com)

☞ Sow seeds for fall vegetables: radishes, beets, carrots, peas and lettuce. We also carry vegetable transplants.

☞ Decorate for fall: We have ornamental kale, mums, pansies, violas, Iceland poppies, snapdragons, stock and ornamental grasses for waves of autumnal color.



### Fertilize

☞ Top-dress perennial beds, azaleas, camellias, and rhododendrons with **Sloat Organic Forest Mulch Plus**.

☞ Feed spring blooming shrubs with 0-10-10 fertilizer. Feed citrus with **Maxsea Acid Food**.

### Prune/Maintain

☞ Prepare garden beds for winter. Clear weeds and rocks. Add soil amendments as needed.

☞ Divide roots and rhizomes of perennials such as agapanthus, yarrow & iris.

☞ Apply all-organic **Maize Pre-emergent** weed killer in fall before winter rains germinate cool weather weeds.

☞ Feed the birds! Don't cut back dead flower stalks; allow rudbeckia, sunflowers, and other flowers with seeds and berries to feed the birds all winter. It's also time to fill bird feeders for winter. We carry a vari-



ety of suet and suet feeders that local species love.

☞ Many insect pests can overwinter in a wooden fence. Spraying the fence with **All Seasons Oil** kills the insects and acts as a wood preservative for the fence!



**We have carving and specialty pumpkins, mini-pumpkins and gourds!**

Stay tuned Thanksgiving weekend:

Sloat Garden Center will have beautiful, premium wreaths,

**fresh cut Christmas trees**, small easy-care living trees

and rosemary cones that are ready to decorate your home or give as a gift.

We also have holiday greens, blooming holiday flowers, and sweet gardener's gifts.