



WALTER ANDERSEN  
NURSERY™

# Garden Talk

SAN DIEGO'S GARDEN RESOURCE

San Diego's Independent Nursery Since 1928™

JULY 2019



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## A Nod To What's In The Bog

By Tom Dougherty



In the bog by the garden railway at the Poway store, there is a group of plants that never need fertilizing. That's because they get all their nutrients by (oh, sweet revenge) eating insects. The varieties you'll find in the bog are **Sundews (Drosera)**, **American pitcher plants (Darlingtonia, Sarracenia)** and **Venus fly trap (Dionaea)**.

These plants are truly carnivorous and meet the requirements of such a designation. They attract, capture and kill animal life forms as well as being able to digest and absorb the nutrients. There are more than 600 species and subspecies that exist.

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## Find Hidden Gems Among The Favorites

By Melanie Potter

It's the time of year when all the old favorites, the standard landscape plants, those reliable ones are blooming. You've seen them, the jacarandas, day lilies, and agapanthus. There's a reason why they appear in so many landscapes and while I appreciate them, I found a few gems that don't get a lot of attention.

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## Let's Grow Blueberries!

By Jolene Andersen

Who doesn't like Blueberries? Especially fresh blueberries? These plants can grow and produce very well in our area. **Vaccinium corymbosum**, the botanical name, is native to the north-eastern part of the United States. Growers have found that by preparing the soil and creating an acid condition, many varieties flourish in Southern California. Newer hybrids have been introduced that do well with little winter chill and are well suited to our milder climate.

Blueberries make a nice landscape plant and can be used as informal

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Blueberries from Monrovia



## What's In The Bog continued from p1



*Sundew*

### How Our Bog Plants Attract Prey

Sundews, with their sparkling, delicate beauty, work like flypaper to capture their prey with tiny drops of glistening, sticky goo.

American pitcher plants have oddly shaped and dramatically colored leaves that become tubular traps for unwary insects.

Venus fly traps are the most familiar. They lie in wait with their little nectar laden leaves open and inviting. When the unsuspecting bug touches the trig-

ger hairs on the leaf surface, the trap quickly closes.

These plants need a humid environment. Their soil must be very damp and acidic. A mixture of half sand and half peat moss works very well. The water must be mineral free. Rain water or distilled water or even reverse osmosis filtered water can be used. Ordinary San Diego tap water with its high salts will probably kill these plants in a matter of weeks.

Come see our bog and look for the lizards that know where to get an easy meal. These opportunistic rascals have been spotted stealing an insect snack from the Sundews. If you are lucky, you may spot the occasional road runner that knows where to find distracted lizards. But not to worry. With all this competition, most plants can get by with as little as one bug meal a week.

Tom Dougherty is a customer service representative at Walter Andersen Nursery's Poway location. His areas of expertise include water plants and citrus. If you are interested in carnivorous plants, visit the annual show and sale for the San Diego Carnivorous Plant Society on July 20 from 10am - 4pm at Balboa Park (Casa del Prado, Room 101). •

## Old Ben Is A Bird Lover & Inventor!

By Melanie Potter

You would think Old Ben is someone who wants birds, lots of birds, to flock to his yard. That is partially true, but he doesn't want them eating his baby plants. "I was having problems with birds eating my seedlings. When the corn or radishes first sprout, the birds eat them as fast as they come up", lamented Ben.

So, one day Old Ben had to channel his inner McGyver and create a solution.

"Conventional methods did not work for me, he admitted. "While at the nursery, I found what I believe to be a new product, the Original Grow Master Gopher Basket. Instead of putting the

ball of the plant in the wire basket, I put it over my container. I put in a bamboo stake to tie the wire mesh to. I also used RapiClip heavy duty garden wire to wrap around the container to hold the mesh in place" he recounted.

But Old Ben is not done describing his invention. "The wire mesh is flexible and stretches easily to accommodate the pots. I purchased the 15 gal mesh which would be a 15 inch diameter root ball, these pots are little over 20 inches and I had room to spare. As soon as the plants are big enough to stand on their own, I will remove the

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## Hidden Gems

continued from p1



*Penstemon gloxiniodes*

I spied the **Penstemon gloxiniodes** sitting next to the **Tacoma stans** and with its show of purple blooms, thought maybe a new color had been introduced. The bell-shaped flowers look similar but the tag clearly identified it as **Penstemon**, not a **Tecoma**. These grow to two feet tall and the flowers attract hummingbirds. **Penstemon** form dense spikes of tubular flowers in early to mid summer. Flower colors include pink, blue, red, purple, and white. They can tolerate dry soil but will need some water through summer's dry months.

The **Natal Albuca** had a spike of interesting looking white flowers. It is nicknamed **Slime Lily** because the leaves excrete a slimy sap when broken, so just admire the plant. The plant is evergreen and hails from **Natal, South Africa**. The foliage is deep green and fleshy and grows to 3' tall. From late winter into spring, the flowers rise above foliage on slender 4 to 5 foot tall stalks. The large white flowers have 3 outer tepals that flare slightly outwards while the inner 3 remain together pointing upward, all with a distinct green midrib to each tepal.

To give it a good home, plant in well-drained soil in full sun along the coast to half day sun or light shade inland. It requires only occasional irrigation in coastal gardens, more frequently inland. •



## Blueberries continued from p1



hedges, individual plantings and even container plants. The most important things you need to provide are full sun and well draining, acidic soil. For most plantings, we recommend a planter mix that contains Canadian peat moss, which is naturally acidic. You could also use Canadian peat moss mixed 50-50 with E.B. Stone Big Harvest Garden Soil. It's ideal to have a soil mix with a pH of 5 to 5.5. Though self-fruitful, you will have better production with two different varieties of blueberries; which allows you to enjoy larger fruit crops due to cross pollination.

When planting in containers, use a fairly large container, like a 20 inch square box or octagonal tub or one of the larger plastic containers, at least a 15 gallon size. Place the mix of your choice in the bottom of the container to bring the root ball up nearly even to the top of the container, pack in additional soil lightly and give a good watering.

If you choose to plant in the ground, dig a generous hole, at least two times as wide as the container, approximately 24 inches wide and about 18 inches deep. Use the same mix (above) as if you were planting in a container, place some in the bottom of the hole to raise the root ball off the native soil. Fill in with the mix, tamp in and water. Planted in the ground, space plants about four to five feet apart so they do not become overcrowded and to allow for ease of harvesting.

About the first of March, start fertilizing

your new blueberries with a good acid-type fertilizer such as Dr. Earth Rhododendron-Azalea-Camellia. Gro-Power Azalea-Camellia-Rhododendron food is another excellent product for acid loving plants. Try to fertilize the first of each month spring through fall for optimum results.

To insure your planted areas stay on the acidic side, you may have to apply Soil Sulphur occasionally, as our water may cause pH levels to rise. To keep them greener, your blueberries may want an iron supplement once or twice a year.

### Blueberry Varieties:

**BOUNTIFUL BLUE** This variety has a prolific fruit set of large, super sweet berries and the "bluest" foliage. Works well in the landscape or in containers. It's a smaller plant to about 3 to 4 feet tall and about as wide. Attractive foliage holds well into winter.

**JUBILEE** Abundant crops of medium-large, very sweet fruit mature from late summer through fall. Attractive blue-green foliage remains evergreen in mild winter climates. Should produce a little better in cooler inland areas. The plant grows to about 4 to 5 feet tall.

**MISTY EARLY SEASON** Very low chill requirements will set sky-blue medium large, very sweet fruit that matures early, usually mid-summer through fall. Attractive blue-green foliage remains evergreen in milder climates. The plant naturally grows a little taller

to about 5 to 6 feet.

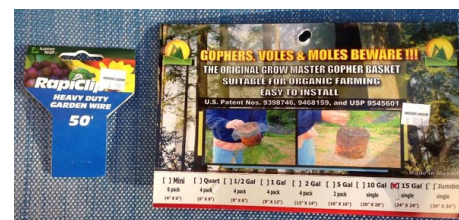
**O'NEAL** This variety is often considered to have the best flavor of the Southern Highbush Blueberries. Large dark blue fruit matures very early from summer to early fall. This one will grow to 5 to 6 feet tall and as wide.

**SOUTHMOON** This variety produces large, sky blue fruit that ripens in summer. Highly productive in areas with cooler winters. White, bell-shaped flowers and colorful fall foliage are added benefits. This one may lose all foliage in winter. The plant can reach 6 feet tall and wide.

**SUNSHINE BLUE** Pink blooms, fade to white and yield abundant crops of large tangy fruit. This is a very low chill variety that grows well and produces even in our coastal areas. Semi-dwarf to about 3 to 4 feet. Attractive foliage holds well into winter. •

## Old Ben Inventor

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wire mesh, and save it for the next time I need it.

This story has a happy ending. "The birds or small animals cannot get in and the very small mesh keeps pests out". And Old Ben, his seedlings, and the hungry birds lived in peace, and happily ever after. •





## Cymbidium Orchid Care

By Walter Andersen, Jr.

### Words From Walter



Cymbidium Orchids are one of the most popular orchids grown in our area. They are considered one of the easiest orchids to grow and they are very rewarding when they start to bloom in the cooler months of the year. They are best grown outside in light shade.

When the pot gets too crowded, they tend to have fewer bloom spikes. If you have not repotted your Cymbidiums in about three years, they should be repotted in springtime. Not only do they outgrow their containers, but after a few years, the potting media breaks down causing poor drainage and possible root rot. If you wait too long to repot, you risk the chance of damaging the bloom spikes for the coming season.

Repotting is easy and begins with removing the plant from the container. If the plants are terribly root bound, you may need to break the container to get them out. You will probably see a mass of roots, usually about 1/4" in diameter and usually a pale tan color. If they are dark brown and kind of soggy, those roots have died. Try to loosen the root ball as best you can. You may break a few roots, but don't worry as there should be many, many more to support new growth after you repot. Try to shake off as much of the old rooting media as possible and cut out the older, dead roots. If you want to divide your plant to make more divisions, this is the time to do that. Grasp the clump and try to twist it in two directions at the same time; you will probably see a weak area where

the back bulbs are joined. Wiggle it more gently and the two pieces should gradually separate. If these divisions are still larger than you want, try to separate those one more time. Don't make your divisions too small because it will take too long for them to bloom again. Ideally the divisions should have five to eight healthy back bulbs in the clump (cut out any old, squishy back bulbs with a shear). At this time you can finish cleaning out the root mass by getting rid of old roots and potting media. Cut off any old leaves and trim back any brown tips to make the plant look better.

I have found that using coconut chips (Coir) is a wonderful planting medium to use when you repot. Coconut chips come in small, tightly compacted bales about 10" x 10" x 6" thick. Take the plastic wrap off and soak the bale in water. I use a 15 gallon container; best to plug the holes if you can. You will be amazed how much the chips expand; to nearly two cubic feet! One small bale can almost fill a wheelbarrow!! You don't need to mix anything in with the chips. I prefer using two gallon or three gallon plastic containers in which to plant Cymbidiums. Place two to three handfuls of chips into the new

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## TO DO LIST: July



### FERTILIZE

For **lawns**, use Marathon Fertilizer for tall fescue, and Bonide DuraTurf Weed & Feed to feed grass and control broadleaf weeds. Feed **ornamentals** with Gro-Power. Feed **vegetables** with Gro-Power Tomato and Vegetable Food or E.B. Stone Organic Tomato and Vegetable Food. Feed **Citrus, Avocado**, and **Fruit trees** with Gro-Power Citrus and Avocado Food. Feed **palms** and **tropicals** with Gro-Power Palm Tree and Tropical Food. Add Ada Perry's Magic Formula to your regular **rose feeding** schedule. **Mulch plants** to conserve water and dress up planting beds.

### WATER

Through October, keep a close watch on watering to make sure plants do not suffer from drought. **Adjust sprinkler clocks** or provide **supplemental watering** to avoid stress to plants. Make sure **lawn sprinklers** are working properly to prevent waste and dead spots.

### PRUNE

**Coral trees** and **roses**.

### PLANT

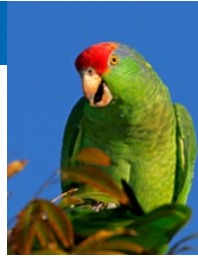
**Plant anything!** Just make sure it gets plenty of water! New plantings will require more frequent, shallower waterings than established plants. **Look for** Plumeria, Hibiscus, Lantana, Plumbago, Gardenias, and bedding plants. ●



## Old Ben:

### Wild Parrots Of San Diego— Born To Be Wild

By Old Ben



In San Diego's older neighborhoods such as Ocean Beach, Point Loma, Pacific Beach, Banker's Hill, El Cajon, Clairemont, La Mesa, and Lakeside amongst the trees, are flocks of wild green parrots or Red Crowned Amazon Parrots. These parrots know paradise when they fly over it. San Diego has one of the largest population of these birds.

In the early morning or evening if you are walking through one of these neighborhoods, you will hear these birds screeching as they fly over. They always travel in flocks and if you are lucky, you will see them land in eucalyptus and palm trees.

How did they get to San Diego? Legend has it that decades ago, the birds were released by a pet shop owner. The truth is not completely clear, but most bird experts believe that some pets escaped, acclimated and thrived.

There are some people who are not wild about these birds, saying that the parrots are obnoxious and are a loud

nuisance. They may not be as graceful and quiet as the hummingbird, but who can't find joy in seeing these parrots preening on the power lines, high on tree limbs, or seeing the flock soaring above the city streets?

The parrots are very social. They squawk to communicate with each other, to head off danger from birds of prey, and announce their coming and going.

The parrots are just over one foot in length. Their brilliant green feathers, green cheeks, and red forehead will catch your attention. If you see one of them up close, you would see blue and red feathers under their wings and yellow tail feathers.

Breeding takes place between March and May. The couple lives together in the nest, usually a palm tree, caring for two to five eggs over an incubation period of 25 - 31 days.

These green parrots were born to be wild. There is something wonderful about knowing they are free to fly. •

## Old Ben's Classic Jelly Feeders

Jelly feeders provide food for a variety of wild birds. Fill cups with grape jelly, dried mealworms, special seeds, and put fresh fruit on the fruit spikes. Feeders vary in artistic design. Especially great for attracting Orioles and Finches. *Jelly not included.*



Your Choice of  
Single Cup or  
Double Cup Feeder

**Sale \$39.99**

Reg. \$49.99



## Old Ben's Specials

Valid July 1-31, 2019

### Old Ben's Classic Wild Bird Seed

Classic mix that attracts a wide variety of wild birds. No fillers.

20lb. bag

**Sale \$24.99** Reg. \$29.99

### Old Ben's Nyger Seed

Attracts Lesser Gold Finches and many other small birds.

10lb. bag

**Sale \$24.99** Reg. \$29.99

### Old Ben's Anniversary Seed Blend

10 ingredients, 95% no mess, attracts small, medium and large birds like a magnet.

20lb. bag

**Sale \$34.99** Reg. \$44.99

*All specials limited to stock on hand.  
No special orders. Cannot be combined with  
any other discount or offer.*

## Ask Old Ben!

How cool would it be if you could reach out and ask Old Ben all kinds of questions about birds, show him your (feathered) bird photos, or share your birding experiences? Well, now you can at [askoldben@aol.com](mailto:askoldben@aol.com)



**Both stores will be  
closed for July 4th**



## Garden Classes

JULY

Saturday classes are **FREE** and last about an hour. Complimentary coffee is served. During inclement weather, classes are held indoors in San Diego and on the covered, heated patio in Poway. Topics are subject to change. See the full schedule at [www.walterandersen.com/calendar/](http://www.walterandersen.com/calendar/).

**SAN DIEGO | 9:00AM**

7/6

Container Gardening

7/13

Bonsai

7/20

Living with Houseplants

7/27

Organic Controls for Garden  
Insects & Pests**POWAY | 9:30AM**

7/6

No Class

7/13

Bonsai Workshop with Tony  
\$35 Materials Fee, Must RSVP &  
Pre-Pay at 858-513-4900

7/20

Fun Fairy Gardens for All  
with Richard Wright

7/27

Staghorn Ferns: Remounting  
& Care with David Ross

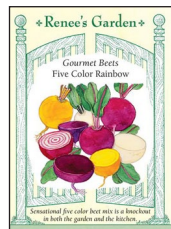
## Cymbidium Orchids

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container so it is about half full. Then place the roots of your division over the chips and try to work a few chips into and around the roots. You will need to hold the division so the clump will be about half buried. When you fill in more chips, be sure they are not too deep, the back bulbs should be about half covered. Fill in more chips and press them down firmly. I also use a short stick (about 1" x 1" x 14" long) and tamp all around the inside of the container. This packs the chips tighter to hold the plant in place. Fill the container to about 1/2" from the top. Place two or three Gro-Power tablets on top of the chips and water thoroughly. The tablets will gradually dissolve to fertilize the plant. Apply more Gro-Power tablets every three months. Place your repotted Cymbidium in a brightly shaded area. If placed in too dark an area, they won't bloom as much. Water about once a week, more often during hot weather. •

July Specials *Valid July 1-31, 2019*

2-Gallon Monrovia  
**Bountiful Blue & Sunshine Blue  
Blueberries**  
**Now \$19.99**  
Reg. \$29.99

**25% OFF Renee's Seeds**

Available in both stores

**25% OFF Cornucopia Seeds**

In Poway only, not available in San Diego

*Specials limited to stock on hand. No special orders. Cannot be combined with other offers or discounts.  
While supplies last. Hedge Fund\$ may be redeemed.*

## Visit Our 2 Locations

**SAN DIEGO**

3642 Enterprise Street  
San Diego, California 92110  
{619} 224-8271

**POWAY**

12755 Danielson Court  
Poway, California 92064  
{858} 513-4900



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