

# Garden Talk™

## San Diego's Garden Resource



WALTER ANDERSEN  
NURSERY™

San Diego's Independent Nursery Since 1928™

## The Search For A Tree

BY MELANIE POTTER

Years ago we planted some trees in the front yard that, at the time, we must have thought were good ideas. The Coast Redwood tree looked healthy only some of the time and eventually became an eyesore, so out it came. Shortly after that, the Mesquite tree had worn out its welcome after multiple trimmings to keep it off of the neighbor's roof, and the realization that it was messy.

So now, we're mulling replacement options after deciding which criteria that a tree suitable for the front yard should have. We've agreed it must be evergreen, not grow too big, and while we prefer a spreading canopy rather than a columnar shape, we're going to keep our options open. **So far, our options include:**

### JAPANESE BLUEBERRY TREE

Shogun series. This is an excellent street, lawn or park tree with glossy green foliage. It has a very ornamental effect from older leaves, which turn bright red before dropping. Blue-black, small olive-like fruit in winter will not stain patios. It requires regular watering, and is a moderate grower, eventually to 40 to 60 ft. tall, 20 to 30 ft. wide, so it would require some trimming to keep to our specifications; it looks nice but may not be the right fit.

### CASSIA SPLENDIDA

Here's a moderate grower to 15 to 18 ft. tall and 15 ft. wide. It's mostly evergreen and blooms golden yellow flowers from summer into fall. Plant in full sun; its watering needs are low.



*Cassia Splendida*



*Arbutus Unedo*

### ARBUTUS UNEDO

Also known as Strawberry Tree, it's a versatile tree that can grow at the beach or in the desert and in any soil or climate type. Grows to 35 feet high with equal spread. The white flowers and edible red strawberry-like fruits appear in the fall through the winter. Trunk

*continued p2*

## Hens & Chicks Are Fun For All Ages

BY MELANIE POTTER

Sometimes we have spare time between getting home from work and starting the evening routine where the family can be outside and looking for fun projects to complete. It occurred to me that one such project might be to plant a succulent bowl using Hens & Chicks, and that I could relay the entertaining story behind its name to my son.

They are formally called sempervivums, which originates from the Latin semper (always) and vivus (living), because

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## What Is Powdery Mildew?

BY CHUCK MCCLUNG

All along the west coast from Mexico to Canada, powdery mildew is one of the most common summer plant diseases. There are many species of powdery mildew, and each one infects a different plant.

Powdery mildew commonly looks as if baby powder has been sprinkled or smeared on leaves and sometimes stems. Older leaves are the first to show damage on Roses and Crape Myrtle; younger leaves are affected first on squash. While it may not kill the plant, it will affect plant growth and decrease the yield of certain vegetable crops.

Moderate temperatures and shade promote the development of powdery mildew, while extreme heat and direct sun inhibit spore development and growth. Hence, we see powdery mildew more on the coast than further inland.

*continued p3*



# August

## Garden Tasks

### WATER

Arrange with a neighbor or your gardener to watch your yard if you go out of town on vacation to make sure everything gets plenty of water. Adjust sprinklers accordingly to make sure they operate properly.

### FERTILIZE

For lawns, use Marathon Fertilizer for Tall Fescue or Scott's Turf Builder or Turf Builder Plus 2 to feed and control broadleaf weeds. Feed ornamentals with Gro-Power. Feed Vegetables with Gro-Power Tomato and Vegetable Food or Dr. Earth 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.

### PLANT

Tropicals, ornamentals, trees, and shrubs. Late crops of warm season vegetables, like tomatoes, squash, corn, and peppers can be planted. Plant Sweet Peas for early crop of flowers.

### LOOK FOR

Bedding plants, Crape Myrtle, Hibiscus, Bougainvillea, Agapanthus, Plumeria, citrus, and Avocados.



## Trees *continued from p1*

and branches shed their bark exposing the red-colored new bark. Plant in sun or shade. Drought tolerant, but will take regular watering. Arbutus marina is a particularly nice variety.

### STENOCARPUS SINUATUS (FIREWHEEL TREE)

Is usually seen as a tree 25-30 feet tall by 15 feet wide in cultivation in California. It has gray bark with brown young branches and is notable in or out of flower for its very attractive large, dark green leathery leaves that have wavy margins and are pinnately lobed on young trees. The 1 to 1 1/2 inch long flowers, primarily red or reddish orange with a yellow globular tip, are arranged with 6 to 20 flowers in an umbel that is reminiscent of a red wagon wheel – these 3 inch wide wheels are quite striking and can appear any time of the year but primarily fall and winter here in Southern California. It takes full sun and needs regular watering.

### MAGNOLIA 'LITTLE GEM'

A medium-sized evergreen tree, the 'Little Gem' Magnolia typically grows to a height of around 20 feet, and has a width of roughly 10 feet. It has a bushy and somewhat conical shape, with fairly dense foliage and can be used as a screen. Plant in sun or partial shade, and it requires regular water.

**If you don't mind a deciduous tree, here are some suggestions that are eye catching, but probably won't be considered for our front yard:**

### CRAPE MYRTLE

There are about 50 species of trees and shrubs in this genus (some are evergreen). It blooms in summer with clusters of crinkled flowers in a variety of colors. These trees prefer full sun and once established, require occasional watering. Some varieties have intense fall color.

### MAIDENHAIR TREE

Beautiful, fan shaped leaves, these trees are also called Ginko, and can grow to 50'. Look for different varieties to suit your needs, as the foliage on Ginko bilboa will turn golden in the fall. When purchasing a tree, it's best to find a male variety as female trees bear yellowish plum-shaped fruit has a foul odor.

### MIMOSA

Colorful landscape tree, attractive to many birds with its deep, pink, pom-pom-like flowers. Loves summer heat, yet is relatively hardy. Needs full sun, occasional watering



Crape Myrtle



Maidenhair Tree (Ginkgo)



Mimosa

and grows to 30'. They are short lived trees with a lifespan of about 25 years.

### TIPUANA TIPU

A moderately fast growing tree with a flat crown that grows as wide as the tree grows high, 20-30 feet. The leaves are divided into many rounded leaflets which are only briefly deciduous in late winter. The golden yellow flowers are abundant in late spring to early summer and will carpet the ground beneath the tree when they drop. Plant in full sun and give occasional deep watering. Give this fast growing large tree some room because it gets big in a relatively short time. ■



## Hens & Chicks *continued from p1*

this perennial plant keeps its leaves in winter and is very hard to kill. Their common names include houseleek in Europe because they were grown on the roofs of houses to thwart fires from lightning strikes. Ancient lore tells of using *Sempervivum* to repel evil



**Krebs Desert Rose**

spirits and protect homes from Thor, the god of thunder and lightning. They are also called Hens & Chicks because the center plant (the hen) grows smaller plantlets (the chicks) around itself.

A quick look around the nursery revealed a nice selection. I found Krebs Desert Rose (grey-green with rosy colored center), Rubikon (bright ruby red rosettes), Vortex (deep green with burgundy accents), Red Cobweb (a thick webbing of gray threads cover green rosettes tinged with red), and Greenji (light green rosettes).



**Greenji**



**Vortex**

Plant these in any container that drains well, terra cotta is a good choice. Use a sandy potting mix and water sparingly as these plants store water. If you have them indoors, make sure they get plenty of bright light. Outside, they can take full sun on the coast but inland, they will appreciate a bit of shade. ■

## The Zucchini Shuffle

BY GRANNY GREENKNEES



About this time of year, when I shuffle out into the cul-de-sac with the bounty from my garden, arms full of zucchini; I see my neighbors head back into the homes. Their doors close, their blinds snap shut, they dive into their pools. Oh, it isn't me, it's my zucchini! They love the sweet peas and the

tomatoes, but it's the zucchini that has them cowering in the shadows and I know this so I have had to change my strategy when it comes to this much maligned garden loot.

I have become quite inventive in my quest to unload zucchini this time of year. I have learned to disguise this lovely vegetable in a variety of ways, but probably the most successful is in baked goods. Oh, wonder of wonders, many of my neighbors have failed to detect the green giant shredded and concealed in the confections left on their door step. These offerings are eagerly awaited and neighbors are never too busy to answer the door when I arrive toting a basket of scones or muffins, as has happened when I arrive with my wagon full of zucchini squash.

*continued p6*

## Powdery Mildew

*continued from p1*



Many plants rarely, if ever, get powdery mildew, while other plants are notoriously susceptible to it, e.g. shrubs like Roses and Nandina; annuals and perennials like Zinnias, Cosmos, Delphinium, Dahlias, and Verbena. Many vegetable gardeners are very familiar with powdery mildew on crops like cucumbers, squash, and tomatoes.

One of the common misconceptions about powdery mildew relates to the difference between why a plant contracts the disease versus what spreads the disease.

Most often we hear that a plant "gets" powdery mildew from overhead watering or water on the foliage. While water on foliage can spread spores of powdery mildew, a plant that is lacking water is more likely to contract the disease. Spores of all types of powdery mildew will germinate and grow in the absence of water. Evidence of this is that on the coast, powdery mildew is more prevalent during the drier summer months than in winter.

A simple demonstration illustrates this point. Plant a cucumber or squash in one pot and plant another in a second pot, but place a saucer filled with water under the second pot. Once vigorous growth begins and the plants require more water, the first one without the water-filled saucer will be far more likely to get powdery mildew.

### Preventing Powdery Mildew

First, be sure your plants are well watered. During summer, vigorously growing squash and tomatoes may require daily watering, especially when grown in containers or shallow raised beds.

*continued p4*

## Powdery Mildew

*continued from p3*

Water the soil not the plant. Keep water off the foliage and avoid overhead watering. Water in the morning instead of evening so that splashed water does not remain on the plant overnight.

Provide good air movement for your plants. Many fungal diseases are promoted by damp, still air. Also give your plants as much sun as they will tolerate; again, damp shade can promote development of mildew spores.

Remove severely infected leaves, especially on vegetable crops and roses. Also be sure to remove plant debris on the ground under your plants.

Use organic, slow-release fertilizers. The beneficial microbes in Dr. Earth brand fertilizers help plant roots access water and nutrients in the soil which creates a healthier, more disease resistant plant.

As a preventive, use a Neem oil-based fungicide. Be sure to read the entire label before application. You will be instructed to apply it in early morning or evening, and not when the sun is at its hottest.

If you think you have powdery mildew on your plant and would like more assistance, feel free to bring in a sample of your plant to the nursery; we'd be happy to assist you in finding the right remedy, so that you are successful in all your gardening endeavors.

*Editor's Note: Chuck is a customer service representative who can be found in our San Diego store. ■*



## Words



### From Walter

BY WALTER ANDERSEN, JR.

## Think Of Hawaii— Envision Plumeria

These wonderful blooming plants are most often associated with Hawaii; however they grow well in most parts of the tropics. They even do well in San Diego, as long as you are in a fairly frost-free zone. They form a large shrub or small tree, and prefer full sun and very good draining soil. If drainage is a problem, they can easily be planted in a container or in raised beds. The stems and branches are fairly stiff and thick and usually need to be a few years old to bloom. Flowers come in red, pink, yellow, white and combinations of colors such as pink, yellow, and white all on the same petals. They bloom at the tip of each new growth.

Give them room as they can reach 6' to 10' in time, and will grow as wide as tall. If the plant gets too big, trimming is very easy and you can root the trimmings!

The plant is deciduous in cooler months but comes out in spring with large leaves and a fairly fast growth. They can grow as much as 12" to 18" a year under good conditions. The rich green leaves are about 8" to 15" long and deep green. Blooms usually start in May or June and continue until the fall. Most have a strong, pleasing, almost intoxicating fragrance.

Plumerias are easy to propagate. If you want to root cuttings, the best time is June, July and August. Make cuttings about 12" to 18" long and let the fresh cut part callous over or dry for about five days. Dip the end in a rooting hormone and place in Plumeria Mix or Sponge Rock. They will usually root



in about six weeks. You may have to support them with a stake because the branch is heavy and may tip over if the mix is very light. Water the cuttings about two times a week, more if it is very hot. Do not keep them too wet as they will rot.

The plants are not fussy as long as they have good drainage and at least a half-day of full sun, perhaps a little shade inland during the hottest part of the day. Feed regularly for best results. High nitrogen fertilizers will give the most growth; however, using a fertilizer high in phosphorus will give the most bloom. Nitrogen is the first number and phosphorus is the middle number normally found on the label on the front of the package. If you use a liquid fertilizer, be sure to use it every two weeks. If you use a dry fertilizer, be sure to read the directions as feedings may vary from monthly to every four months, depending upon the brand. I recommend a dry type because you do not have to feed as often.

Mites, aphids and white fly are the few pests that may be a problem. Most can be hosed off with water. In extreme cases, consult with a nursery professional to get the proper assistance. ■

## WAN Is Awards Winner

Walter Andersen Nursery won the following awards for its 2013 display at the San Diego County Fair. Award of Merit, Bill Teague Well-Maintained Gardens Award, and took second place for Unique Color Landscape. ■





## What Seeds To Feed



BY OLD BEN



Nyjer Seed

There are several types of wild bird seed available today. To determine the best seed for attracting birds to your backyard, you need only read the information provided below. If you provide the right seed, you will be rewarded with the birds you want visiting your feeders.

### TYPES OF BIRD SEED

**Black-Oil Sunflower** Considered the number one choice to feed and attract the greatest variety of birds to your feeders. Rich in oil, black-oil sunflower seeds give birds the energy they need to live. The thin shells make it easy for birds to open, even for the smaller birds. It attracts a lot of species of birds including Nuthatches, Goldfinches, House Finches, Grosbeaks, Jays, Woodpeckers, Cardinals, Purple Finches, Crossbills, and Sparrows.

**Millet** Is a small round seed about the size of the head of a pin. White millet is light colored and the most popular with birds. Millet is a major component of seed mixes. Millet is liked by Doves, Sparrows, Juncos, Cardinals, Quail, Towhees, and Red-Winged Blackbirds.

**Oat Groats** Oil rich oat groats are popular with many soft-billed, ground feeding birds. They are a good source of B-complex vitamins, vitamin E, calcium, phosphorus and potassium.

### BLACKBIRDS, ROBINS, AND SPARROWS LIKE IT...

**Wheat** An excellent staple bird food for most bird species. Wheat is valued nutritionally for its high protein content, carbohydrates, high soluble fiber, vitamins, and minerals.

### SPARROWS, DOVES, PHEASANTS, AND LARGER GROUND FEEDING BIRDS LIKE IT...

**Safflower** Safflower is grown worldwide, surviving in arid regions where other crops are not able to grow. It's a seed rich in oil,

light colored and glossy. Rumor has it that squirrels don't like it. Doves, Jays, House Finch, Cardinals, and Woodpeckers like it.

**Nyjer Seed** Nyjer seed is a finch favorite. This tiny black seed from India and Africa is the only wild bird seed not grown in the U.S. It is very rich in oil and has to be sterilized because of all the weeds in the seed when imported.

### LESSER GOLD FINCHES, AMERICAN GOLD FINCHES, PURPLE FINCHES, HOUSE FINCHES, AND DOVES LIKE IT...

**Shelled Peanuts** More often now, peanuts are being offered in seed mixes. These include peanuts and peanut hearts, a little central portion of the peanut. They are usually in better seed mixes. Peanuts are valued nutritionally for their high protein.

### WOODPECKERS, MOCKINGBIRDS, NUTHATCHES, FINCHES, GROSBILLS, AND JAYS LIKE IT...

**Cheap Mixes** While they won't be labeled as such, cheap mixes rarely attract the most desirable birds. Mixes generally consist of red and white milo, cracked corn, striped sunflower and other seeds.

**Premium Mixes** These are a mixture of bird seeds that are attractive to a variety of birds. Generally consisting of black oil sunflower, peanuts, white millet, and others mixed together.

I have by no means covered all the seeds used to feed wild birds, but have selected the ones I feel are important and will attract the most wild birds.

This August brings the fourth anniversary of Old Ben's Workshop and the fourth year Walter Andersen Nursery has carried Old Ben's products. To celebrate this anniversary, Old Ben has formulated a new seed mix called "Old Ben's Classic Wild Bird Seed". This mix contains all seven of the featured seeds above. This special seed mix is available exclusively at Walter Andersen Nursery. This classic mix will be specially priced for the month of August. ■

## Old Ben's Specials!

Sale Prices Valid  
July 26–August 31, 2013

### Introducing Old Ben's Classic Wild Bird Seed!

Seven selected seeds to bring the most birds to your yard! No milo in this mix.

August Introductory Price

**20 lb. Bag**

**\$19.99** Regular \$24.99

**5 lb. Bag**

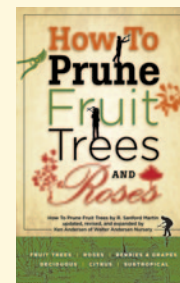
**\$6.99** Regular \$8.99

### Platform Feeder

**\$29.99** Regular \$42.99

Best feeder for most seed.

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



### How To Prune Fruit Trees And Roses

Pick up this new addition of *How To Prune Fruit Trees*. Ken Andersen, CEO

of Walter Andersen Nursery, supplied extra chapters to the book. We also took the time to update the original manuscript. The expanded version includes new chapters on tools for pruning trees, and pruning roses. The original illustrations of Martin's book were preserved. Buy in store or online at: <http://shop.walterandersen.com/browse.cfm/how-to-prune-fruit-trees-revised-edition/4,2648.html>

# August

## In-Store Specials!

**Sale Prices Valid  
July 26–August 31, 2013**

*Save on a Second Crop of Veggies.*

**4" Veggies**  
**\$2.49** Reg. \$2.99

*End of Season Rose Blow Out!*

**Bush &  
Climbing Roses**  
**\$9.99** 5-Gallon  
**\$24.99** 15-Gallon

*Some exclusions apply.*

*Stock Up Now!*

**Ada Perry's  
Magic Formula**  
**\$24.99** Reg. \$29.99

*In Poway Only!*

**20% OFF**  
**All Equipales  
Furniture**

Handmade in Mexico by skilled  
artisans, made from 100% leather,  
robust wood construction.

*Limited to stock on hand. No special orders.  
Cannot be combined with any other discount or  
offer. Hedge Fund\$ Certificates can apply.*

## The Zucchini Shuffle *continued from p3*

In case you're wondering what recipe I use to conceal zucchini, I will share a recipe that works every time. Here it is. It's my Yummy Chocolate Muffin recipe and I have neighbors asking for these muffins, requesting more and more. The only caveat is this: If you conceal

zucchini this way, people will want the recipe and then you have will have a dilemma, to tell the truth and spill the secret ingredient, or keep the recipe to yourself and always it in your arsenal of "no fail zucchini disguises". Oh my. ■

### Yummy Chocolate Muffins

1 3/4 cups sugar  
1/2 cup vegetable oil  
1/4 cup butter, softened  
2 eggs  
1/2 cup buttermilk  
1 tsp vanilla  
2 1/2 cups all-purpose flour  
1/4 cup baking cocoa  
1 tsp baking soda  
1/2 tsp baking powder  
1/2 tsp cinnamon  
1/4 tsp cloves  
2 cups finely-shredded zucchini  
(patted dry)  
1/2 cup sliced almonds

In large mixing bowl, beat sugar, oil and butter. Add eggs, buttermilk, vanilla, and mix well. Combine the flour, cocoa, baking soda, baking powder, cinnamon, and cloves. Gradually add oil mixture. Stir in zucchini, chocolate chips and almonds.

Spoon into cupcake tin lined with papers or 10" tube or fluted pan. Bake at 325 degrees for 25 minutes for muffins or 55-60 minutes for cake. Check for doneness.

Try this out if you are a zucchini pusher, especially if you do the zucchini shuffle.

## August Garden Class Schedule

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/).

9:00AM   SAN DIEGO NURSERY	9:30AM   POWAY NURSERY
8/3 Pumeria	8/3 Insects: The Good, Bad, & the Ugly!
8/10 Summer Rose Care	8/10 Plumeria
8/17 Winning the Weed War	8/17 Citrus & Avocados with Richard Wright
8/24 Basket & Container Gardening	8/24 Orchids
8/31 Bring 'Em Inside: Houseplants!	8/31 Herbs with Farmer Roy from Sunshine Care Facility

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