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Have You Seen Me?

By Melanie Potter

Have you seen me? You may not spot me, I'm hard to see, but you're probably no stranger to the damage I can do to your tomato plants. I'm a **tomato hornworm**, a voracious eater of plants in the Solanaceae family. That means I'll eat not only your tomatoes, which I'm most commonly identified with, but I'll decimate your peppers, potatoes, and eggplants, too.

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Photo: Adam Stewart

Try These At Home

By Melanie Potter



'Cora Red' Vinca

Here are some great color ideas for containers. We think **Vinca** is looking a lot better than it used to. Vinca loves the heat and look at just a couple of the new vivid colors we carry. '**Cora Red**' is a brilliant, clear red color and for something really unusual, check out '**Jams 'N Jellies Blackberry**'. This Vinca is such a deep

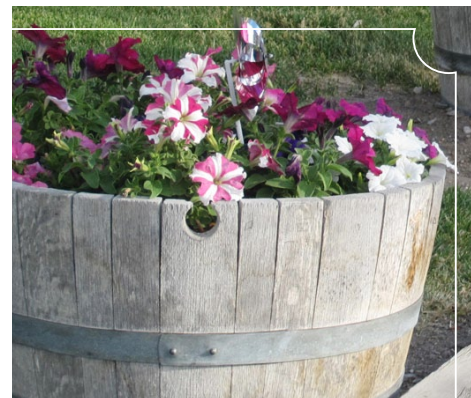
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Roll Out The Barrel

By Melanie Potter

We are well into summer and I hope our newsletter readers have travel plans of some sort. My family ventured north, to June Lake, for a few days and while there, I noticed how colorfully the town was brightened with an explosion of blooming bedding plants. Many were captured in half oak barrels and window boxes. I am now inspired to plant a half oak barrel because nothing else creates a rustic, bright, and homespun looking presentation of flowers like a barrel. Well, maybe a wooden cart or wheelbarrow, but I didn't see any of those.

Fortunately, the nursery has wooden half barrels in stock. I say fortunately, because for the longest time we



couldn't obtain them. Something about the wineries not making them available but now people are drinking either more or less wine and barrels are making their way back into the market.

This is an easy planting project. Start with a barrel that has holes in the

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purple that it looks black. The color oozes richness and is a show stopper. **Petunias** are hard to beat for the spectrum of colors available and most eye-catching of them might be **'Phantom'**. You won't miss it due to the startling contrast of colors—a black bloom with yellow star pattern bursting from the middle. If you have room for a drama queen in your planter, 'Phantom' may fit the bill. •



'Phantom' Petunia

Roll Out The Barrel continued from p1

bottom for drainage. The ones we sell don't have holes yet, but we will drill them for you. Use a premium all purpose potting soil like **Edna's Best Potting Soil**, or a special mix if you intend to install plants that won't fare well with an all purpose soil. You can plant a small tree in the barrel and add plants under it, or just plant loads of color. Fill with soil to within a few inches of the top. Then, go crazy with bedding color, making sure your plant choices require the same amount of sun or shade, and water. In June Lake, **Petunias** seemed to be the most popular choice and if you opt for them, you'll have many colors to choose from.

If your barrel will be in a sunny spot, in addition to petunias, you'll find **Marigolds, Zinnias, Alyssum, Lobelia, Dianthus, Verbena, Geraniums, Calibrachoa**, and **Pentas** and that is only a short list of your options.

For a shady spot, take a look at **Coleus, Impatiens, Kalanchoe**, and **Heuchera**.

Succulents look terrific in half barrels and the choices are varied and include **Dorotheanthus Mazoo 'Trailing Red'**, **Crassula**, **Sedum**, **Aeonium**, **Echeveria**, **'Firesticks'**, **'Chalksticks'**, **Portulacaria** and one of my favorites, **Agave 'Blue Glow'**.

To keep your barrel blooming, don't forget to feed the plants. We feed everything at home with **Gro-Power** but there are many options in both stores. •



'Jams 'N Jellies Blackberry' Vinca



TO DO LIST: August

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. Later this month, plant Sweet Peas for early crop of flowers.

LOOK FOR

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

Words From Walter

By Walter Andersen, Jr.

Gardening Tips For The End Of Summer



If your vegetable garden looks like this, it's time to start over. A wide selection of herbs, fruit, and vegetables are available, and if you plant now you'll have time for another harvest.

Mulching

The San Diego County Fair is history and the horses are running at Del Mar. August is here and so is the heat! Our water shortage becomes even more critical when it is hot. Here's one way to stretch the power that water has on a garden. Mulch, mulch, mulch, we really can't say it enough. Mulching your soil will keep it cooler, reduce evaporation, and as the mulch decomposes, it adds important organic materials to your soil. A fresh layer of mulch will also tidy things up and make planting areas look new again. Before you put down your mulch, be sure to get rid of any weeds in the area. Mulching will also discourage many seeds from germinating, which reduces weed problems in the near future. To be the most effective, add at least 2" to 3" of mulch in your planting areas.

Roses

Don't just dead head your roses; give them a slightly heavier pruning to promote new growth and blooms

for later in the year. Be sure to fertilize them with Gro-Power or Gro-Power Rose & Flower. We recommend applying fertilizer every 4 to 6 weeks.

Tomatoes & Vegetables

If your tomatoes or other veggies have run their course, there is still plenty of time for another crop. You might check your peppers too, and in warmer weather leaf lettuce is also a good performer. Mixing in E.B. Stone Planting Mix to condition the soil when you plant will get them off to a great start. Feed with Dr. Earth Vegetable Food and reapply monthly for optimum results.

Container Gardens

Container gardens might need some freshening, so check our bedding plant sections to extend your summer color. Petunias, Marigolds, Cosmos and Lobelia are all great for instant color. For shady areas, check out the Bedding Begonias and Impatiens, which are hard to beat for lasting color. •

Water: Making Every Drop Count

By Ken Andersen

Given California's severe drought situation, everyone is thinking about how to reduce their water consumption and, hopefully, avoid the \$500 fine the legislature has passed for water wasters. Here are a few tips to keep in mind.

Check Your Sprinklers!

Check your irrigation system frequently for proper operation. If water is spraying

onto walkways and driveways, it is money, literally, down the drain. Most sprinkler heads are set for specific areas that they cover, i.e. 1/4, 1/2, full circle. If you have planters or lawns that don't specifically meet those angles, consider replacing them with adjustable heads. These can be adjusted from 0-360 degrees in most cases. Just make sure the new heads

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Have You Seen Me?

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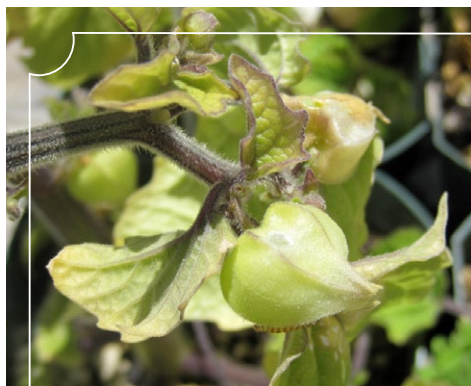
Hornworms attack from the underside of leaves, and with their bright green color, they are well camouflaged. Two tell tale signs will alert you that hornworms are amongst your veggies. You'll notice leaves are being eaten and see black dots on the leaves, which are caterpillar frass (a nice way of saying poop). If you find these signs, turn some leaves over and you'll eventually spot the large green caterpillar with its white 'v' shaped markings along its sides and a horn protruding from the rear.

Hornworms grow to be a huge caterpillar, the size of a fat finger, 3-4 inches long. It's best to pick them off and dispatch them (which is a nice way of saying kill). If you want to resort to chemical means, you'll use BT, *Bacillus thuringiensis*, a powder that is sprinkled over your plants. BT is safe to use on edibles. It is a naturally-occurring bacterium that makes pests sick when they eat it. Actually they become more than sick, which is a nice way of saying their guts rupture and they die. The caterpillar stage of their life lasts 60-90 days so they have plenty of time to wipe out your garden, which in my mind makes BT a well deserved course of action.

The only cool thing about a tomato hornworm is that it is the caterpillar for a Sphinx Moth, a very big moth that is about the size of a hummingbird. The moths come out at night in search of nectar and in the process of finding a meal, they pollinate plants. If you have kids and find tomato hornworms, it's fun to let them run their course and see the huge moth they become. Tomato worms crawl down from the plants and burrow into the ground to pupate, so you'll want to transfer them to an enclosed space, with plenty of food and some dirt. Once buried, they develop hard, brown shells that completely enclose their bodies. They remain several inches underground while their bodies make the change from caterpillar to moth. This stage can take anywhere from a few weeks to all winter, depending on the climate. •

Getting Familiar With The Unfamiliar

By Melanie Potter



Cape Gooseberry

My family does not subscribe to the snout to tail food trend, but we are big fans of trying new food and tasting different cuisines. I have kimchee and fish sauce in the fridge, amchur, asafoetida powder, fenugreek seeds in the spice cabinet, harissa in the pantry, and when long beans are on sale, I stock up. We are curious enough to enjoy poking around the Indian and Asian markets, but sometimes it's intimidating to buy new vegetables and try them.

When I nose around the nursery, I am always surprised by the variety of plants stocked, which makes me wonder what do we sell that is unusual to the western diet, but common in those more exotic? Depending upon the time of year, you'll find Shishito peppers, Chinese broccoli, bitter melon, Japanese cucumber, edamame, and Ichiban eggplant in seedlings. More varieties are available in seed.

If I could beg, borrow, or steal a curry tree (*Murraya koenigii*), I would be in hog heaven. Not to be mistaken with the other curry plant (*Helichrysum italicum*, a rosemary-looking herb that actually smells like curry), it's technically an herb that has an anise or citrus flavor that is commonly used in Indian food. The best I can do is to find it in Indian markets, sometimes. Currently, you won't be able to buy this plant to grow, as it is a host for the Asian citrus psyllid and is quarantined. Plants MAY be available in two years. Recipes may suggest substituting it with Bay Leaf, but it's not even close.

What we do have includes:

Thai Chili Pepper

Grown in China and used in Chinese cuisine. They have a pungent flavor and a bright red color, which makes them popular as a garnish as well as a flavoring. Their taste is described as "woody" or "earthy."

Yuzu

Native to Tibet and interior China but more widely cultivated in Japan, Yuzu is a hybrid citrus fruit tree that produces bitter, orange-like fruit.

Cape Gooseberry

Cherry-sized, yellow-fleshed berries originally cultivated in the Andes where they are still grown today. The round orange fruit is loosely enclosed in a papery husk. They can be eaten fresh or cooked in pies, jams, and sauces for savory foods.

Kohlrabi

The taste and texture are similar to a broccoli stem or cabbage heart, but milder and sweeter. It can be used in salads and slaws and can be used interchangeably with collards and kale.

And More...

Due in shortly are Red and Green Shishito, Longevity Beans (*Gynura*), ginger, and Miracle Leaf (*Byrophyllum pinnatum*). You'll also find purple sweet potato which is named Hawaiian, Japanese Purple, Okinawan, and Molokai Sweet Potato.

We can get numerous exotic herbs and vegetables from our vendors so if you don't see something you want on the tables, ask to special order it.

Causa Rellana

This is a Peruvian recipe for a layered potato and chicken salad dish, served cold, that uses the most popular chile in Peru, the Aji Amarillo. I first tried it when Donovan Lewis, in our Poway store brought it for lunch. His wife, Martha from Peru, had made it.

Causa Rellana

8 medium potatoes (about 3-4 pounds)

Juice from 3 limes

1/2 cup onion, chopped

4 tbsp vegetable oil, divided use

1-2 yellow peppers Aji Amarillo, seeds removed. *One pepper will give you a mild, pleasantly spicy taste. Use two if you prefer a spicier variation.*

1 minced garlic clove

2 cooked and shredded chicken breasts

2 tbs mayonnaise

2 tbs Dijon mustard

2 hard cooked eggs, well-chopped

Salt & pepper

Mix the chopped onion with half the lime juice to marinate. Boil and mash the potatoes. In a blender or food processor, add the remaining lime juice, 1 tbsp oil, Aji Amarillo chile, garlic, and salt to taste, then process until smooth. Gradually add small amounts of the chile/lime mixture and mix well with the potatoes until they turn yellow. Add additional oil and more seasoning if needed. In another bowl, toss the chicken with mayonnaise, onion mixture, Dijon mustard, salt, and pepper until it binds, you don't want it too wet.

With the remaining oil, grease a springform pan. Layer one half of the potatoes at the bottom and press down, top with chicken mixture and press down, and finish with potatoes. Chill thoroughly, this is a dish served cold. Before serving, decorate the top with chopped eggs. You can also use sliced olives, parsley, and avocado. Release from the springform pan and serve.

Donovan shared Martha's recipe and his source of the peppers. Martha makes this without using exact measurements, but I was able to find a recipe that is very similar to hers. You'll find frozen Aji Amarillo chiles at Azteca Market in Mira Mesa. ●

Things You Can Do To Help Birds This Summer

By Old Ben



Billions of birds in North America are carrying out activities related to raising their young and preparing for migration. There are many simple things the nation's 45 million bird watchers can do to help birds with their life sustaining tasks.

The next three months are critical. Some studies suggest that perhaps as many as half of all migrating birds do not make it back home. Many succumb to various threats along the way. Our birds need all the help they can get.

Leave Baby Birds Alone

If you find a baby bird out of its nest, don't pick it up or bring it indoors. Although people mean well by rescuing the baby birds they find, in almost all cases, the parents are nearby and know best how to care for their young.

Provide Fresh Food & Water

Although birds can find a lot of food out in the wild during the summer, they appreciate fresh seed and a source of fresh water. If you have a birdbath or water feature, make sure to clean it regularly, and keep it filled with fresh water. If you have hummingbird feeders around your home, make sure that they're cleaned often and that the sugar water is replaced before it starts to ferment. A batch is good three to five days depending on sun/heat exposure.

Keep Cats & Dogs Away From Birds

Roaming cats kill billions of birds every year, taking an especially high toll on fledglings. Loose dogs also

have an impact on nesting birds. For the bird's and your pet's safety, please keep your pets secured.

Be A Good Landlord

If you are lucky enough to have Swallows or Phoebe's on your porch or under your eaves, keep the nest intact. The birds will be gone soon enough, and in the meantime, they will help you by eating hundreds of insects each day. If you have active nest boxes, clean them out after the young have fledged.

Be A Bird Friendly Boater

When you're boating, avoid disrupting birds. Boats operated in proximity to nesting birds can cause behavioral changes, even leading to nest abandonment.

It doesn't take a huge effort to make a difference. Birds keep insect populations in check, help to pollinate fruit and vegetable plants, and many of their songs can cheer the heaviest heart. Let's take a greater role as stewards, and make sure that we take better care of these sweet, fragile beings.

Editor's Note: Join us Aug. 30 at 9:30 a.m. for a **'Homemade Treat' workshop with Old Ben**. This workshop is limited to 15 people and costs \$20 per participant. Attendees will need to bring a large mixing bowl, cookie sheet, spoon for mixing, 1-cup measuring cup, and a cookie cutter (no bigger than 3"). Attendees will make three wild bird treats and all ingredients will be provided. **RSVP** to the class by calling 858-513-4900. ●

Old Ben's Specials

Prices Valid August 1-31, 2014

10lb. Nyger Seed
Includes FREE Finch inside the bag! (\$5.99 value)
\$19.99 Reg. \$23.99

20lb. Old Ben's Classic Wild Bird Seed
\$16.99 Reg. \$31.99

5lb. No Mess Wild Bird Seed
No Shells, No Mess!
\$9.99 Reg. \$14.99

Bird House Platform Feeder
\$19.99 Reg. \$31.99

Clear Hummingbird or Oriole Food
Your Choice
3 For \$10 Reg. \$6.99

5lb. Old Ben's Goldfish/Koi Food
\$9.99 Reg. \$14.99

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



Water: Making Every Drop Count continued from p3

are compatible with any existing ones you don't replace. Also look for leaks or broken heads, and check the timing as well. If it rains, shut the system off until it everything dries out!

Mulch!

This is an easy way to not only spruce up your yard but save water. Two to three inches of mulch or bark around your plants helps retain water in the soil, covers unsightly dirt areas, reduces weed growth, and just makes everything look better. There are different mulches to choose from: decorative bark, shredded bark, shredded redwood, and red

cedar. Don't forget to readjust your sprinklers after mulching to account for the reduction in evaporation!

Switch Them Out!

If your landscape needs an upgrade, consider replacing high water use plants with more drought tolerant ones. In addition to California natives, many South Africa and Australian plants are very drought tolerant once established. Choose your natives wisely as many are not fire resistant. We can help you find the plants you need for the look you want without increasing the fire hazard around your home.

Consider Succulents

Succulents are always good choices for a water wise landscape. In the right setting they can be spectacular! Make sure they are compatible with the plants around them. They also make great container plants.

Lawns

If you are considering replacing your lawn, choose carefully. Artificial turf makes a nice replacement but there are things you need to consider. If you have trees in your lawn area, make sure they have a source of water after the lawn is removed. We have seen instances where trees planted in a former lawn area have died from lack of water once the lawn sprinklers have been removed. Plan on replacing artificial turf. Nothing lasts forever and that is the case with artificial turf. In high traffic areas it can mat down and lose its sheen. Also, exposure to the weather for long periods can break it down. Artificial turf can retain a lot of heat in the sun. If you enjoy activities on your lawn, keep this in mind. If you want a natural replacement, i.e. some other living ground cover, there are many to choose from and some will take foot traffic. •

Garden Classes AUGUST

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/.

SAN DIEGO | 9:00AM

8/2

Summer Fertilizing

8/9

Orchids For Everyone
& Everyplace

8/16

Weed Wars!
Vanquishing Common Weeds!

8/23

Good Bug, Bad Bug—You Decide

8/30

Cymbidium Orchids:
Care & Remounting

POWAY | 9:30AM

8/2

Plumeria: Grafting & Growing

8/9

Blooming Perennials
with Carol Fuller

8/16

Fruit! with Richard Wright

8/23

Summer Rose Care

8/30

Old Ben's Bird Treat Workshop
See page 5 for details

A couple of months ago we anticipated holding a tomato tasting at our Poway location. Bad news to report is that we've had to cancel due to crop failure. Even growing professionals can be vexed when it comes to growing tomatoes!

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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