



WALTER ANDERSEN'S

GARDEN TALK

SAN DIEGO'S GARDEN RESOURCE



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Grower Explains Challenges Behind New Plant Introductions

by Monrovia Nursery



PHOTO: PETER A. HOGG

The *Tiny Towers*, an Italian cypress spent 10 years in development before it was released for sale. Customers wanting to acquire new and interesting plants need patience and must be willing to pay more for such premium acquisitions. The process for introducing a new plant includes its discovery, propagation, patent application and a long development time before it can be released to the public.

Throughout its 79-year history, Monrovia has been known as one of the leaders in finding fascinating new plant varieties and introducing them to consumers through independent garden centers. They have brought to market more than 300 exclusive plants, almost a third of which are patented or have patents pending. "Our challenge is to identify and develop those traits that people really want and that are suitable for a range of climates and regional preferences," explained Nicholas Staddon, director of new plants. He points out that the trend toward smaller home gardens means that consumers want more compact-growing varieties. Bright colors and tropical varieties are popular – so are plants with variegated and colored foliage. Unusual flowers, like double flowered Mandevillas are in demand. So are thornless varieties of roses and bougainvillea.

"Gardeners may not realize that most new varieties are bred to be hardier and more pest resistant, as well," Staddon added. "We strive to find plants that are better in many ways."

Introducing new plant varieties is a costly, time-consuming process, which is why few growers or breeders put a significant effort in this area.

Growers look for new varieties all over the world, with many breeders, hybridizers and plant hunters always on the lookout. Monrovia's Variegated New Zealand Christmas Tree (*Metrosideros excelsa* 'Gala') was discovered in a backyard in New Zealand, brought to our attention by a local garden center owner. A recent introduction, Balboa Sunset™ Trumpet Vine (*Campsis radicans* 'Monbal'), was discovered in a residential garden on Balboa Island in Southern California.

Not all interesting traits end up being worth developing. Trial plants are first sent to the Monrovia Bullpen™ – named for the bullpen in baseball, where players warm up for the game. "At any one time, we might have 200-300 varieties of plants we're evaluating in the Bullpen, but typically only one in 50 becomes a new product," said Staddon. The process may take several years. The *Tiny Tower*™, a compact variety of Italian Cypress, was more than 10 years in the development stage before it was launched in 2001. One reason was that they wanted to make sure it would maintain its smaller stature and, secondly, they found it was difficult to propagate. "Our production team has to figure out the best method of growing a new variety. We might have identified the most magnificent plant in the world, but if we can't propagate, it won't work."

The next hurdle is to grow a substantial quantity for a national release. A sophisticated tissue culture laboratory allows Monrovia to propagate fairly large numbers of a new variety, so it can be launched with a widespread distribution. ●

Bigger, Better Flowers Available Now

This April watch for a brand new line of beautiful flowering annuals and perennials that both stores will carry. Walter Andersen Nursery is teaming up with the people from Miracle Gro and one of our growers, to bring you an easy-to-grow line of annuals and perennials, many you can't find anywhere else, to make your garden look better than ever. These award winning flowers will be grown in larger pots than you usually find, giving you a larger, and more vibrant plant. These flowering wonders will be available through May, and quantities are limited. Watch for varieties of Angelonia, Argyanthemum, Calibrachoa, Verbena, Penstemon, and many others.



Nursery Select™ plants are better garden performers because more cuttings lead to more and bigger blooms, and the larger pot allows more soil which promotes stronger root systems.

Walter's Picks: Roses To Look For, Most In Bloom

by Walter Andersen, Jr.



PHOTO: JACKSON & PERKINS

Blossom Blanket is new to the market and is a compact, spreading groundcover sporting clusters of large blooms. The light pink buds open to full white with bright yellow stamens.

This is just a sampling of some of the wonderful roses we have at the stores. Many or most should be in bud or bloom by now and the bushes are looking just great. The first bloom is always exciting, especially with the new roses which even we have not seen many of. Each nursery has over 150 varieties from which to choose.

Amalia is a nice red Hybrid Tea that came out in 1991, so it has proven its performance. Long stems for cutting, high centered buds.

Aromatherapy, also a Hybrid Tea with perfect pink buds. This rose blooms in great numbers with very strong fragrance. NEW this year.

Betty Boop is a bright Floribunda, white in the center with bright red edges. It is a single bloom in large clusters, very showy, also very popular. About 11 years old and going strong.

Blossom Blanket is NEW this year. It is a white groundcover rose that blooms almost all summer. Pink buds open to white with yellow stamens, glossy leaves, should be a winner.

ELLE is also NEW this year. It is a Hybrid Tea with classic shaped buds that open to pink and ivory. It has a nice fragrance and beautiful foliage.

Full Sail is a wonderful white Hybrid Tea. Not a lot of truly great whites, but this is much better than average. Wonderful almost 'honeysuckle' fragrance.

Heaven on Earth was introduced last year. It is an apricot-pink floribunda, with an 'old-fashioned look'. Strong and vigorous grower, slightly spreading, with lots of blooms.

Honey Dijon is a NEW AARS winner for 2005. It is a Grandiflora rose with an uncommon 'honey mustard' color. So far there has been a lot of interest in this new introduction. It is a naturally vigorous rose with a sweet scent.

Intrigue is also an AARS winner from 1984. It has proven its worthiness over the years as a very disease resistant rose. It is a plum colored Floribunda. A true winner.

Marilyn Monroe has an unusually light apricot color. This Hybrid Tea won top honors at the San Diego Rose show the year it was introduced in 2003.

Melody Parfume is a Grandiflora introduced in 1999. Intriguing different color of plum to deep lavender. Blooms are fully double with wonderful form. Sweet spice scent, foliage is deep green.

Michelangelo came out last year. It is a Romantica with an old fashioned look. Bright yellow with a strong sweet lemony fragrance.

Midnight Blue is a shrub rose also from 2004. Very deep purple blooms on this smaller shrub rose. Strong spicy clove fragrance. Like no other rose.

The Pink Knock Out Rose is a very bright NEW single, unusually large for a single bloom. It is a floribunda that is very sturdy, very disease resistant and a non-stop bloomer. Brilliant pink color sure to catch your eye.

Queen Mary 2 is a NEW Hybrid tea for 2005. It is pure white with a distinctive fragrance some say a hint of banana. Large nicely formed blooms.

If you have an interest in TREE ROSES we have them also in 4' tall, 3' tall and 2' tall. There are even a few grafted on an 18" trunk. CLIMBERS? We have lots of them in many colors. Supplies are limited, call for availability. ●

Mark Calendars for Rose Show Preparation Class & Exhibit



PHOTO: KEN ANDERSEN

Walter Andersen Nursery will hold its sixth annual rose show April 9-10 at its Poway location. This popular event continues to grow with last year seeing more than 100 entries. To help participants ready their entries for the show, a rose preparation class will be held April 2 at 9:30 a.m., at the Poway location. At the class, professionals from the Rose Society will be on hand to show participants how to present roses, provide tips as to what the judges look for in entries, and will assist in preparing participants for this show as well as the rose show to be held in San Diego.

The rose show gets underway April 9 with entries being taken from 8-10:30 a.m., followed by judging from 10:30 a.m.-noon. Roses will remain on display until noon on April 10. Winning roses last year included 'Hot Cocoa', 'Mr. Lincoln', 'Sally Holmes', and 'Priscilla Burton'. Walter Andersen Nursery is located at 12755 Danielson Court in Poway. Call 858-513-4900 for more information.

Great Avocado For Small Yards

A new Guatemalan-type avocado tree named 'Holiday', is ideal for the backyard grower. Among its many virtues, 'Holiday' grows to only 10-12 feet tall which is small for an avocado tree. Nonetheless, it produces generously, and the avocados it bears are large, weighing 15-30 ounces each. None of this would matter, of course, if the fruit weren't tasty. 'Holiday' avocados have a rich, mellow flavor. They ripen at a welcome time, August through December, when other varieties have finished bearing. We still like 'Don Gillogly' which remains a popular choice but is often in short supply. Walter Andersen Nursery will have some available this summer. As more information becomes available regarding 'Don Gillogly' we've found that it requires some trimming to keep it truly dwarf. 'Holiday' appears to require less intervention to maintain its size.

Author To Hold Lecture And Book Signing

PHOTO: RICHARD GUERRA



Love of Palms Will Be shared in Photos and Words

David Leaser is a longtime member of the International Palm Society and the International Plant Propagators Society. His interest in

palm trees inspired him to visit some of the most beautiful palm gardens in the world, where he began to photograph their collections. By showing palm trees in the landscape, Leaser has created a book that will appeal to all lovers of the tropics. The opening pages of *PALM TREES: A STORY IN PHOTOGRAPHS* (Westwood Pacific, \$39.95) show why so many people are enamored with palm trees. The symbols of the tropics, palm trees and the images they conjure up are the antidote to the hectic lives we face.

Walter Andersen Nursery is pleased to have Leaser lead a palm presentation April 16, 11 a.m. at its Pt. Loma location. He will share with participants his Top 10 list of palms for Southern California. Joining him will be Jerry Hunter of Rancho Soledad Nursery who will talk about the unique palms available for sale in San Diego. Following his presentation, Leaser will sign copies of his book, *PALM TREES: A STORY IN PHOTOGRAPHS*. Participants may bring their personal copies or purchase one at the nursery. A limited number of palm seedlings will be available and given to guests who purchase the book. The presentation is free to the public.

The nursery is located at 3642 Enterprise St., San Diego, 92110. Call 619-224-8271 for information. ●

Fuss Free Ficus Suits Many

Did you know that there are over 700 species of Ficus which is more commonly known as the fig? Of course, the first species that must come to mind is the Fig Tree (*Ficus carica*). Known to man since the beginning of western civilization; it produces that delicious, uniquely flavored fruit, the fig, which people have enjoyed for centuries.

Some of the more common but strictly ornamental members of this family are the weeping fig (*F. benjamina*), a favorite indoor tree with a smooth trunk and graceful arching branches; the India Rubber Plant (*F. elastica*), an upright, single stemmed plant with glossy, green leaves; the Fiddle Leaf Fig (*F. lyrata*), sporting large, wavy edged grass-green leaves that provides a bold effect as an indoor plant; the Creeping Fig (*F. pumila*), a vining favorite with small leaves and tiny stems that cling to any masonry to become a beautiful wall covering. Mature foliage of this species changes with the leaf becoming 2" x 1" and a little more leathery in texture.

When expanding your indoor or outdoor landscapes with Ficus, some general culture points to remember for indoor specimens are that they grow well when root bound in the same container for years if the soil mixture is porous. Give monthly fertilizer applications during the warm summer months. The soil should be moist but never soggy. Reduce watering when the weather cools and days are short and dim.

An outdoor tree like the Laurel Fig needs some summer water. The evergreen vining Ficus, the Creeping Fig, is a vigorous climber tolerating more of a chill than most of the tropical figs. The edible fruit bearing fig tree needs sun, good drainage and is not particular about soil, along with being drought resistant when established. But be sure to check out the temperature "lows" for your area to make sure this fig is suited to your climate.

There is a Ficus to fit almost every need – shrub, vine, evergreen or deciduous tree or houseplant. ●

Seasonal Recipe

Broccoli & Cauliflower

Equal amounts of broccoli and cauliflower
Italian flavor bread crumbs
Garlic
Butter and olive oil
Salt and pepper to taste
Grated Italian cheese

Cook the broccoli and cauliflower until almost done. Drain well. In a large frying pan melt the butter with the olive oil and sautee the garlic. Add the broccoli and cauliflower to pan. Generously cover with bread crumbs and cheese. Turn the heat on med-high and turn often. Bread crumbs will start to brown and stick a bit. Scrape bottom often. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Serve hot. It should be somewhat crunchy.

We Carry Premium
Sunshine Soil Products
from Sun Gro



2)



Word From Walter

With Walter Andersen, Jr.

"Looking For Color All Summer?"

We have lots of blooming plants to brighten your yard right now. Mostly in two sizes, 4" and one gallon. These, for the most part, are quick and easy to grow. Be sure to amend the soil with Sunshine Planter Mix or Gardner & Bloome Soil Conditioner. Usually about half soil and half mix. You might add just a little 'starter fertilizer' to get them off to a good start. Feed monthly after that with what we use and recommend, GroPower, as it is good for almost everything. Some plants to look for might be Gazanias; some have magnificent blooms up to 4" or 5" in diameter. Geraniums are always a good choice; we have both Ivy and Zonal types, most with buds and blooms. There are some scented leaved Geraniums also. They are different and some are used for cooking. We have lots of plants in the Daisy family. *Felecia* comes blue or white; there is even one with variegated foliage, so it is very bright even if it is not in bloom. *Osteospermum* is pretty much a 'bullet proof' plant as long as the soil drains fairly well. There are many new colors such as white, lavender, purple, yellow and orange. *Salvias* come in many colors with some getting tall and others being low growing. They pretty much bloom all summer, every day. One of my favorites is *Salvia leucantha* with its gray-green foliage and spikes of lavender blooms for a very showy effect. This plant could be used alone in a large pot or it would make a wonderful specimen plant as it is very easy to grow.

Marguerites have been a staple for color forever. There are some new colors, not just white and yellow anymore. Check out the wine red and pink ones, which are very nice. Another daisy similar to Marguerites is *Euryops* daisies. Some have rich deep green foliage while others are grayer, they all look great. Most bloom in yellow. For smaller plants as a border or window box, look for the *Kalanchoe* which also come in many colors contrasted with rich dark green leaves and large clusters of bloom that nearly cover the plant. You'll have blooms on and off all summer. When the blooms fade, cut them off (foliage still looks good) to send out new blooms in about six weeks. For shady areas don't pass up the *Fuchsias* which are great for summer color in shaded areas with many, many, color combinations. For sun or shade it is hard to beat two different *Azaleas*, "Red Ruffles" and "Alaska" which is white. These tend to bloom on and off almost all year. They should have lots of blooms right now. When putting *Azaleas* in the ground, go extra heavy with a planting mix of mostly peat moss which they love. Remember feed monthly with GroPower to ensure everything will look great. ●



Butterflies And Plants Create Botanical Treasure

by Ken Andersen



Flat flowers are welcoming to butterflies (hummingbirds prefer trumpet shaped flowers) because of the ease in obtaining nectar. The butterfly above dined on nectar from a *Jatropha*, *Calliandra*, *Buddleja*, and *Tibouchina* also attract butterflies.

Arguably the most beautiful insects in the world are butterflies. These gentle creatures inspire awe and wonder in all who see them. Children seem especially fascinated with their color and flight. On a recent trip to Florida, I visited two wonderful places devoted to the research and care of butterflies; The Key West Butterfly Conservatory and Butterfly World in Deerfield Beach.

This was my second trip to the Key West Butterfly Conservatory which is less than two years old. This beautiful store front on the east end of Duval St. backs up to a spectacular Victorian style greenhouse filled with beautiful butterflies and exotic plants from all over the world. The meandering pathway takes you through a spectacular botanical garden where the butterflies fly free amongst the flowering plants of the collection. The Conservatory imports the butterfly chrysalides from breeders the world over and hatches them in their laboratory. Once ready to fly the butterflies are released into the greenhouse to live out their short lives.

If your vacation in Florida doesn't take you as far south as Key West you may be able to visit Butterfly World in Deerfield Beach, just north of Ft. Lauderdale. Butterfly World is much like the Key West Butterfly Conservatory but is a larger facility with more than just butterflies. Unlike the Key West facility, Butterfly World breeds and raises its own larva and chrysalides. You can see this operation in progress as you pass the viewing area of the laboratory. The butterfly garden covers more area and is not housed in a greenhouse but rather a screened enclosure. The variety of butterflies here is broader. Once you leave the butterfly enclosure you make your way through a beautiful botanical garden a highlight of which is the Passion vine collection. With aviaries, an insectarium, and nursery onsite, Butterfly World is truly a delight for all ages and is much more than just a beautiful collection of insects.

For more information on the Key West Butterfly Conservatory or Butterfly World visit their websites at: www.keywestbutterfly.com and www.butterflyworld.com ●

Gross Grubs

Gotta Go!

Hate grubs? We do, but fortunately we love a product that makes short work of them and now is the time to begin using it. It's Bayer Advanced Lawn Season-Long Grub Control and prevents grub damage all season with one application. The product also helps turf recover from grub damage and kills mole crickets and European crane flies.

Grubs are grass gobblers. Technically, they are the larvae of beetles and as you read this they are rising from winter rest to begin feeding on roots and grow to adulthood. In summer, the adult beetles return to well watered lawns to lay eggs which begins the cycle again.

In the spring and fall, grubs live below the soil and feed on grass roots, which destroys your lawn. As many as 15 grubs can infest each square foot of lawn, multiplying damage with each bite. See page 4 for rebates on Bayer products.



WAN Hawaiian Botanical Tour Update

Walter Andersen Nursery's Botanical Tour of Hawaii is set! As of press time we still had some spaces available for this fabulous vacation on Oahu. We will be staying at the historic Royal Hawaiian Hotel on Waikiki Beach. The itinerary includes round trip non-stop airfare from San Diego to Honolulu for 7 nights at the Royal Hawaiian. Also included are hotel transfers and activities that include: welcome reception, tours of Waimea Valley Audobon Gardens, Foster Botanical Gardens, Queen Emma's Summer Palace, Pali Lookout, Ho'olmaluhia Garden's, and Koko Crater Botanical Gardens. On breakfast buffet and a plant Q&A session with Ken and Walter Andersen, luau at the Royal Hawaiian, last night cocktail reception and dinner. Optional tours available for USS ARIZONA/ Submarine Museum – USS BOWFIN and USS MISSOURI, and a hike to the rim of Diamond Head Crater led by Ken Andersen. Call Jenny Meeks at Kahala Travel 619-282-8300 for more information or reservations, or go to www.kahalatravel.com and click on our logo. You won't want to miss it! Watch for details of other tours we may be offering in the future.

WAN To Host Proven Winners Spring Trend Show

There's still time to register for a special planting event to be held in April. Proven Winners horticulturists and designers will be at our Poway store for a potting how-to session plus a presentation that previews 36 plant varieties for spring, many of which have never been available before. Proven Winners experts will partner with participants to plant a one-of-a-kind container design. Participants are asked to bring a container – new or recently cleaned – or can purchase one at the event.

This is a great opportunity to become more familiar with Proven Winners, a sponsor of National Gardening Association's (NGA) National Garden Month®, April 2005, an annual event that promotes the benefits of gardening to individuals, communities, and businesses.

This year's theme is "Give a Garden—Add Beauty to Life" and ties perfectly to the Trend event. What better way to give a garden then to do so in a container? Container gardening isn't new but many of the plants presented at the Trend show will be. The company specifically breeds all Proven Winners varieties for use in containers. They are more compact, more

tolerant of extremes in temperature, and more vigorous than other plants. The flowering plants also produce blooms for longer periods and flower colors are more intense. "Container gardens provide many of the same benefits as traditional beds and borders but without the digging, weeding, and other time-consuming chores," said Marshall Dirks, Director of Marketing and Public Relations for Proven Winners, North America. The event will be held at the Poway store, 12755 Danielson Court, April 23 and begins at 7:30 with breakfast and registration. The presentation will follow from 8am-9am with personal potting services concluding the event. All participants will receive a gift bag and be eligible for prize drawings. Tickets cost \$20 (and are non-refundable); seating is limited and tickets are expected to sell out. Participants will also receive \$20 store credit to use at the event. For information or reservations call 858-513-4900. ●

Wildlife Habitat



Walter Andersen Nursery gets many requests from customers wanting to know what plants attract wildlife. Installing the right plants is the first step to inviting nature to your yard, but have you thought about

Backyard Wildlife Habitat Certification Requirements:

FOOD

Provide seed and fruit bearing trees and shrubs. Provide flowering plants that supply nectar and pollen for butterflies, beneficial insects, and hummingbirds. Plant species whose foliage feed butterfly larvae. Include a wide variety of plants. Natives are a good choice as they not only feed and house wildlife; they also require little water and little soil amendments or fertilizer. Locate bird feeders near trees so birds can fly to cover. Maintain them through the winter when natural foods are scarce.

WATER

- Must have at least one source.
- Elevated bird bath, ground water dishes, pond or fountain.
- Must be kept clean and filled regularly.
- Place in an open area to provide some protection from cats and other predators (10' from shrubs).

SHELTER

- Provide a complete plant community with tall trees, shrubs, hedgerows and groundcover.
- Rock walls, logs or wood piles can also provide shelter.
- Nesting boxes can be installed facing away from prevailing weather and away from bird feeders and other nesting boxes.

SUSTAINABLE GARDENING PRACTICES

- Eliminate oil based chemical insecticides, herbicides and fungicides. They disrupt the natural food chain and kill beneficial insects.
- Use compost and pasteurized manures instead of chemical fertilizers that are harmful to the necessary microorganisms in the soil.
- Mulch around your plants to reduce watering and prevent weeds.
- Try creating your own compost pile.

For more information visit the national Wildlife Federations websites at: www.nwf.org for resources and to see other habitat gardens, www.enature.org for information about birds and other animals. ●

going further to create a sanctuary for wildlife and even certifying your yard?

The Backyard Wildlife Habitat is affiliated with the national Wildlife Federation. Its purpose is education on habitat restoration for wildlife survival. Certifying your backyard as an official backyard wildlife habitat site rewards you for the dedication you have shown to making a place for wildlife in your world. Once your habitat is certified, you will receive a handsome, personalized certificate of achievement recognizing your yard as part of the National Registry of Backyard Wildlife Habitat sites. You'll also receive a free, lifetime subscription to the quarterly Habitats newsletter and may purchase a weather-resistant yard sign.

Below are Helpful Hints to Create a Critter Friendly Environment:

GARDENING TO ATTRACT WILDLIFE

Making your garden attractive to wildlife that includes songbirds, hummingbirds, butterflies, toads, lizards and other creatures is primarily a matter of providing shelter, water and food. It's also important to avoid using pesticides. Try to emphasize native plants since they are familiar to our local wildlife and adapted to our climate. Also remember that a garden teeming with wildlife is not overly tidy; parts of it are left to grow naturally to provide safe havens for all sorts of creatures.



Old-Fashioned & New-Fangled Daisies Are Gardening Greats



Perky and cheerful, daisies and the daisy look alike add color to the landscape all through the summer. They can be used in large, colorful mass displays, to fill narrow beds, combined in borders with shrubs or displayed by themselves in a large decorative clay pot.

Some highly recommended perennials for highlighting the summer garden are marguerites, Transvaal daisies, felicias and euryops. Two of the popular assets of the Transvaal daisy (*Gerbera jamesonii*) are the distinctive flower and exquisite colors. The single flowering and double forms come in several shades of yellow, cream, white, pink, coral, rose, orange and also red. The newer, intensely colored hybrid varieties have flowers that measure four inches or more across. They provide continuous color any time of the year with peaks in early summer and late fall. They do best in full sun or partial shade in hotter areas. The crown of the plant should be about the soil level after planting.

Glistening yellow, pink and white marguerites (*Chrysanthemum frutescens*) all but smother the shrub with flowers making it an excellent potted plant as well as a garden accent. The rapid growing but frost tender marguerite should be pruned lightly at frequent intervals for continued bloom. They thrive in sunny locations. You might consider using them as a flowering hedge. Also, don't forget the compact varieties that do well in pots.

Another addition to the garden is the blue marguerite (*Felicia amelloides*), a daisy relative with blue flowers. It sports shrubby growth that is low and compact and usually grows in any sunny spot of your garden. Felicia makes an excellent edging around permanent plantings. Grow it in pots or containers or let it spill over a wall. The euryops is another daisy-like flowered shrub. It's grayish-green foliage and deep yellow flowers are able to thrive in gusty ocean winds but do need protection from heavy frosts. Established plants are fairly drought resistant while displaying a long and spectacular blooming season.

Any one of the daisy delights mentioned here is sure to please whether in containers or part of the garden. And, don't forget, the flowers make beautiful summertime bouquets. ●

Unique Hydrangeas Provide Color Choices

by Dana Groot, Owner Florabunda Nursery



This hydrangea is perfect for foundations that are large enough for solid color with a bonus of gorgeous flowers. Plant it in problem acidic soils beneath canopies of shade trees or even smaller accent trees. It's good for edging outdoor living spaces with cooling, rich green foliage and provides close up appreciation of huge flower trusses.

Hydrangeas have long been a popular plant sold in California nurseries. They are a singularly unique plant in that flower color can change from pink to blue, or any color of purple in between, depending on soil chemistry. The presence of aluminum in acid soils will yield a blue flower, while high levels of phosphorous in soils with a more neutral ph will produce a pink bloom. White varieties will always be white.

The most popular varieties cultivated in California belong to the genus macrophylla, or big leaf hydrangeas. These named varieties are hybrids whose genes originate in Japan. Hydrangeas begin their annual cycle with a period of strong vegetative growth during the mid to late summer months. Flowers initiate as the days shorten and night temperatures fall during September and October. During November, December and January the plants rest in a dormant stage while the flower buds vernalize. As the days lengthen and nights begin to warm during the spring, growth begins again, this time culminating with a show of extraordinarily large and intensely colored blooms in late May and June. All the while, an abundance of water and humidity are required for growth and development.

When landscape hydrangeas are sold later in the spring, or after the blooms on a florist hydrangea are spent, an outdoor location is ideal for growth and development. On the coast, full sun makes the best plant with the best character. Inland, afternoon shade is recommended to shelter the plants and flowers from high temperatures. Pruning should occur in late July to thin excess branches, remove old blooms and reduce size. The resulting vegetative growth should not be pruned again as it will bear the flowers for the next season. Whether planted in the ground or shifted to a decorative pot on the patio, an abundant supply of water will be required to support growth and develop the quality foliage that will nourish next season's blooms.

Late summer is a good time to begin influencing bloom color for the following season. Pink plants should be fertilized with a ph neutral source of nitrogen and plenty of phosphorus. Plants can be best "blued" by starting also in late summer with an acid forming source of nitrogen such as ammonium sulfate. Minimal phosphorus should be applied, if any, and a few tablespoons of aluminum sulfate should be sprinkled around the base of the plant. Aluminum sulfate is not very soluble, so several irrigations by hand will be required to move it into the root zone. Iron chlorosis can be problematic in California. This can be remedied with a top dressing of iron and ammonium sulfate followed by a few irrigations by hand. ●

Spring Has Sprung!



by Walter Andersen, Jr.

Don't Forget Your Hat & Herbs

With the weather warming up it might be a good idea to pick up a new hat for working in the yard. We have a nice selection of 'garden hats'. The best are those with a wide brim all the way around, they are cooler and will shade you from the harmful rays of the sun.

We also have a great selection of herbs. If you want to 'spice up' your meals or just change the flavor, there are lots of herbs to help. Most come in small two or three inch pots. There are larger plants in four and six inch pots also. Even some in one gallon containers, but the majority are found in the smaller pots. Most are easy to grow in a sunny location. Be sure to add some soil conditioner to the soil because extra humus will improve your success. Most gardeners who grow them use an organic type of fertilizer which is usually safer and not so apt to burn the plants. Check the labels and try to get something with almost equal amounts of nitrogen, phosphorus and potash. The numbers are going to be a 4 6 2 or maybe 5 5 5. You don't need something with a lot of nitrogen (the first number) which causes too fast a growth which creates a weak plant. A more 'balanced' formula is best. We usually recommend a dry plant food that is scattered around lightly about once a month. You can cultivate it in just a little but not more than one inch deep. Water after you apply the fertilizer.

This is a great time to plant, just as the weather warms. Many of the herbs could be used in a large pot, maybe 16" in diameter or you could have several herb varieties in a pot that size. Just keep the really vigorous ones trimmed a little so they don't crowd out the others.

*There are so many herbs on the tables that it is impossible to list all of them, however, this will give you a good idea of what we usually have this time of the year. Mint, we have at least 10 different Mint varieties. Be careful planting mint because most are invasive with runners near the surface or just below. These make excellent potted plants. Plant them in a two gallon container and sink it in the garden, keeping about one inch above the soil, trim off any runners that try to cross. You can also choose from Cress, both 'upland' and 'watercress', Arugula, Cilantro and Lemon Verbena. Lemon Verbena can make a nice shrub to about 4' tall if you trim it a little so it grows thick and bushy. We have a couple types of Dill, Chives, and Savory as well as Sorrel and Bronze and Green Fennel. Epazote, Borage, Chicory, and Rosemary is available in several sizes and growth forms, some growing straight up with others spreading almost like a groundcover. Here is an unusual one, *Alpinia galanga*, or Thai Spice Ginger, you process the roots. There are many more, some common, some rare, but most are in one location in the nursery; just ask for the 'Herb Table'. We have five or six varieties of Geraniums used in cooking. Rub the leaves and you will find many different aromas. Spice up your life with Herbs. ●*

Discover The Colors Of Emotion Through Flower Therapy

by Leatrice Eiseman

The power of color is well established. Throughout time, nature's spectrum has played a vital role in areas that significantly impact our everyday lives, from the color of our walls, to our clothes, to our cars – and, even more meaningfully, our emotional responses.

International color expert Leatrice Eiseman, author of five books, including *Colors for Your Every Mood* and *The Color Answer Book*, has unearthed the philosophy of Flower Therapy.

"Our response to color is intensely emotional, and flowers can be a catalyst for feelings that stimulate more than just our senses

of sight and smell," said Eiseman, Executive Director of the Pantone Color Institute.

"Color can help us find the balance we seek from our surroundings. And, flowers are an ideal way to harness the power of color to enrich our lives," said Eiseman.

The following are Eiseman's five emotional color palettes that are expressed through color combinations in floral arrangements and the flowers that bring them to life.



Nurturing: A true sense of caring is created by a combination of colors that are fragile, soft and tender. Arrangements in pastel shades and the softest yellows, peaches, warm pinks, creamy whites and subtle greens make us feel safe, snug and loved.

Continued P4

the wee corner

by Walter Andersen, Jr. & Richard Wright

In future newsletters we'll address an area of miniature gardening. Check The Wee Corner for information about garden railroading, fairy gardens and other tiny garden topics. This issue, we look at Bonsai.

Bonsai

The dwarf pomegranate (*Punica granatum 'Nana'*) is a showy, dense dwarf shrub that displays attractive orange-red single flowers at an early age, followed by colorful fruit.

With our gardening spaces getting smaller and smaller it can be hard finding just the right plants to fill that "Wee Corner" in your gardening heart. One type of gardening that has been around for hundreds of years is Bonsai which is basically 'dwarfing' a plant to have a miniature of something that is normally larger in nature. As I understand, the Chinese originated it when they had to move their village and transported some of their favorite and necessary plants in pots. When they arrived they found the plants were just fine, so they kept them in the pots and 'Bonsai' was created before finding its way to Japanese culture.

Most Bonsai prefer to be grown in some shade due to the limited moisture available in the typically small pots. The containers are usually shallow terracotta pots about 3" or 4" in diameter to over 24" for large specimens. The largest is called "Imperial Size", which translates to 8 hands needed to move it. Often Bonsais are very old and have been in the 'family' for many years, and it is an honor to inherit a nice specimen.

Once you get started you will find all sorts of plants that you can Bonsai, from A-bies (Fir) to Z-amia (Cycad) and even Bamboo! I have seen Citrus, Poncirus trifoliata (Flying Dragon), the only citrus that is deciduous so don't think you are killing it when it starts losing its leaves. It has very twisted branching, bears fruit and has big thorns which make it beautiful when grown in a Bonsai form. Some other suggestions include Cotoneaster which has small leaves and can produce a small flower and seed pod that resembles a fruit, (you may end up with a plant that looks like a miniature apple tree).

Boxwood is also often used. With its ruff bark, small leaves and slow growth it makes a great bonsai. If you look carefully, you might find the perfect plant with twists and turns from years and years of pruning. Search for that inner beauty then remove some of the unnecessary branches and you will have a really nice 'old' plant in just a few months! You can also start your own from a small 4" pot or one gallon container; even a 5 gallon plant can be hiding a masterpiece. Also popular are many types of Juniper, either the low spreading type or the more upright ones. The upright ones look like miniature trees that could be hundreds of years old. The spreading Junipers adapt well to the 'cascade' type of Bonsai. Olive trees are available in very small sizes, perhaps 6" to 8" tall or try a one gallon size. There is a dwarf Pomegranate often used because of the bloom and since it loses its leaves in winter, you'll have different looks at different times of the year. A few other popular plants to work with are small leaved Ficus, Elms, and Ginkgo and of course Japanese Maples, which should be looking great right now.

Getting started with this hobby is easy and your first step could be to buy a book that will give you illustrations on how to do things or attend any of our bonsai classes (next one is in Pt. Loma on April 9. Poway will hold a bonsai workshop this summer) or ask our knowledgeable staff. ●

Don't Miss These Rebates!

Below are terrific savings on products we highly recommend. They are mail-in rebates so look for the forms with the product and hold onto your receipt.

- **SAVE \$5** on Bayer Advanced PowerForce Grass & Weed Killer 32 oz. concentrate.
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- **SAVE \$3** on Bayer Advanced Season-Long Grub Control.

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4) www.walterandersen.com

Spring Class Schedule

All classes are free and begin at 9:00am in Pt. Loma at 3642 Enterprise Street, and at 9:30am in Poway at 12755 Danielson Court. On rare occasions, we may need to make a last minute change. If you have questions, call 619-224-8271 (Point Loma) or 858-513-4900 (Poway). Show up early if you don't like standing, and have coffee on us!

POINT LOMA

- April**
- 4/2 Azaleas
 - 4/9 Bonsai
 - 4/16 Fairy Garden Workshop
 - 4/23 Cymbidium Orchid Repotting #1
 - 4/30 Epiphyllum

May

- 5/7 Attracting Butterflies & Birds
- 5/14 Herbs
- 5/21 Grafting
- 5/28 Bamboo

June

- 6/4 Shade Gardening
- 6/11 Cymbidium Orchid Repotting #2
- 6/18 Cactus Selection & Growing
- 6/25 Subtropical Fruits

POWAY

- April**
- 4/2 Rose Show Preparatory Class
 - 4/9 Heirloom Tomatoes & Vegetables, Steve Goto, Special Guest Speaker
 - 4/16 Citrus, Varieties & Care
 - 4/23 First Trend Show! Paid Event, Limited Seating Plant Pest & Disease Control
 - 4/30 Organic Gardening, with the Folks from Dr. Earth

May

- 5/7 Introducing New Plants Special Presentation by Monrovia Nursery
- 5/14 ORCHIDS—Care and Culture, Charlie Fouquette & Bud Close, Special Guest Speakers
- 5/21 Staghorn Ferns—Varieties, Care & How to Remount Them
- 5/28 Summer Rose Care Made Easy

June

- 6/4 How to Create a Stylish Landscape with Designer Kelly Fore Dixon
- 6/11 Summer Fruit Tree Care
- 6/18 Water Gardening
- 6/25 Carnivorous Plants

Color Therapy Continued From P3



Romantic: A sensation of intimacy, nostalgia and comfort is captured in a color palette that includes delicate warm and cool colors with lavenders and pinks at its heart.



Sensuous: Rich, luxurious color combinations of set the mood for sophisticated, passionate and even seductive settings. Robust reds and purples, hot pinks and spicy oranges are at the soul of this dynamic floral feeling.



Tranquil: Serenity and relaxation are the essence of this color scheme reminiscent of sky and sea that includes clear, light shades of green, misty blues and other cool hues.



Whimsical: Fun-loving, free-spirited, playful feelings are conveyed by using bold, contrasting colors. ●

TOOL SHED

by Richard Wright

The Soil Scoop

by GARDEN WORKS

"Dig a little, Weed a little, Dig a little, Weed a little, Furrow, Furrow, Furrow, Plant a lot, Saw a little more," well something like that.

I am singing a happy tune once again, not just because it's spring, but because I can do all kinds of dirt-e-jobs with just ONE tool, the Soil Scoop,

by GARDEN WORKS. When I first saw this scoopy-clawy-poky thing I just shook my head in disbelief, "How can that work". I was used to the old fashion hand trowel. But it works, boy does it work. Almost as hard as me! When it comes to playing in the dirt, what can't it do? As the Landscape Designer and installer of the new Garden Railroad expansion at our Poway nursery, it was my tool of choice. I used it to dig holes for 4", 1gal. even 5gal. plants. You can even score the roots with the serrated edge. Making trenches for 1/2" irrigation line, no problem. Scoring the ground for 1/4" drip irrigation, and covering them up, done in a drop of sweat. Because it's stainless steel, it makes for easy cleanup. The "Soil Scoop" makes a great applicator for my favorite fertilizer (Gro-Power). The new version has a nice padded handle that is yellow, so it is easy on the hand and easy to find. My old one has a wooden handle that's still OK with me. The stainless steel blade will take a beating and keep on digging. Wet or dry, hard or soft, it just keeps on digging and digging and digging. And best of all, the Soil Scoop makes a great back scratcher. If you are running out of room on your "Utility Belt" this is an "ALL-N-ONE" must for all you superhero gardeners.

Richard Wright provides customer service in our Poway store as well as offering expertise in garden railroading, bonsai, and fruit trees.

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