

# Garden Talk™

## San Diego's Garden Resource



## Mums The Word

BY MELANIE POTTER

If we are going to talk about fall color, you can't keep mum about including Chrysanthemums somewhere in your landscape. The types of mums, of which there are about 30 species, are differentiated by their petal arrangements, but all types come in a wide variety of colors, including pinks, purple, orange, blue, yellow, and red. This is the season when both stores receive regular deliveries of China mums and regular fall bedding mums. If you're looking for cut flowers to bring a feeling of fall into the house, look no further than China mums. These are mums with big heads and a vase life of one to three weeks.

Did you know that it's not just their range of colors that make these favorites of fall, but that the plants appreciate shorter days? Chrysanthemums are "photoperiodic", which means they bloom in response to the shorter days and longer nights we have in fall. Therefore, do not plant chrysanthemum flowers near street lights or night lights because the artificial lighting may wreak havoc with their cycle.

Plant in full sun and in well-drained, enriched soil, and don't overcrowd chrysanthemums as they require good air circulation to reduce the chance of disease. Divide every couple of years.



Chrysanthemums not only look pretty in your home, but they contain a derivative that protects plants falling prey to insects. You may have heard our customer service employees telling you about various products that work because they contain Pyrethrum, a natural source of insecticide. Spent Chrysanthemum flowers are pulverized, and the active components called pyrethrins are extracted. This is applied as a suspension in water or oil, or as a powder. Pyrethrins attack the nervous systems of all insects. ■

## Bulbs Are Best Pal For Brown Thumbs



Golden Dawn Bulbs

BY DAVID ROSS

Brown thumb got you down? Tired of having to work to grow flowers? If so, have I got something, many some things for you!

Bulb season is upon us, and while they don't look like much now, they may be just the bullet proof bloomers you have been waiting for.

Bulb, the catch-all word we use for rhizomes,

corms, and true bulbs, are dry, ugly looking things that require a little faith, and a belief that if you plant them they will grow. And grow they will. Stored inside is all the energy and information needed to produce beautiful blooms within just a few months! That's right, with little help on your part; these ugly bulbs will be growing and blooming in no time.

Due to arrive the end of the first week of September will be the Paperwhite and many other varieties of Narcissus. Not only will they be up and blooming in just a few months, but they will multiply and you will

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## A Thanksgiving Garden

BY MELANIE POTTER

Last year we created what we called a Thanksgiving Garden. In a large container, we planted a Bay Laurel tree. These can be large trees, but can be kept small as well. Under the tree we planted thyme, sage, parsley and rosemary. All the things you might use when you prepare your Thanksgiving dinner.

Laurus nobilis, also called Sweet Bay, is a native to the Mediterranean and isn't picky about soils, but does need one that drains well. Foliage is leathery and aromatic and can be used in soups, sauces, stews and in pickling spice. Add a couple of leaves to the water in which you boil potatoes for mashed potatoes and they will have the mild scent and flavor of bay.

To underplant the Thanksgiving garden, we turned to some Mediterranean favorites; Thyme, which is a member of the mint family, and Rosemary. Thyme is a low growing, woody perennial. It is extremely fragrant and flavorful and

*continued p2*

# September

## Garden Tasks

### FERTILIZE

Roses with Gro Power. Give Camellias and Azaleas their last feeding of the year with Gro Power Camellia & Azalea Food.

### WATER

Through October, keep close track on watering to make sure plants do not suffer from drought stress. Adjust sprinkler clocks or provide supplemental watering to avoid stress to plants.

### PLANT

Sweet Peas, winter annuals like Calendulas, Stocks & Snapdragons. Fall bulbs are available. Look for cool season vegetables. ■

## A Thanksgiving Garden

*continued from p1*



grows well in tough, dry conditions. The pink, lavender or white tubular flowers are popular with bees. The tiny gray-green leaves remain evergreen. Rosemary is one of those wonderful herbs that make a beautiful ornamental plant as well as a welcome culinary seasoning. Its Latin name, *Rosmarinus officinalis*, means “dew of the sea”.

Culinary sage refers to a small group of the genus *Salvia*. Sage prefers a warm, sunny location, although it does not enjoy extreme heat. Pruning after flowering will keep plants attractive and prevent them from getting too woody and leggy. Parsley grows best when planted in organic matter so you can amend the area in the container it will be planted. Keep it moist so it doesn't dry out. All these herbs favor sun and appreciate a well draining soil, which makes them perfect companions for the Bay Laurel tree. ■

## Wee Corner: We Have Bugs for What's Bugging You

BY MELANIE POTTER

We're not going to lie. The stores make a lot of money selling products to kill bugs. Ironically, we even make some money from selling bugs. That's right, just take a look in the refrigerators at both stores and you'll find bugs, beneficial ones that is.

We always have a selection of good bugs to eat the bad bugs. That means ladybugs are ready to go home with you and eat aphids and other insects that have soft bodies, like mites, white flies, and scales. Release them in the evenings, around the base of plants, and most importantly release them on your plants that are under siege by pests (so they will easily find food; hungry ladybugs will leave if they can't find food). Keep them in the refrigerator until you are ready to use them.

Nematodes control grubs, fleas, fungus gnats, and other pests that develop in the soil. Upon finding a pest, they enter it through various body openings or directly through the body wall. Once inside, the nematode releases a toxic bacteria which kills the host larva within 24 - 48 hours. The bacteria create a food source and a hospitable environment for the nematodes to reproduce. When the



food resources within the dead pest become scarce, the nematodes exit and immediately begin searching for a new host. Since nematodes are sensitive to light, apply them early in the morning or at dusk. Follow the directions on the package for application instructions.

In spring, we also carry praying mantis egg cases. These are good for eating spiders, fruit flies, crickets, beetles, and moths. Praying mantises do not actively hunt down their prey. Instead, they wait unmoving and virtually invisible on a leaf or stem, ready to seize any passing insect. Release them in warm weather. They are sold as an egg case. Put the egg case in the landscape where they will soon hatch. ■

## Bulbs Are Best Pal

*continued from p1*

get more and more blooms year after year. Re-blooming Bearded Iris will be in as well. These bulletproof plants will take the hottest area in your yard and reward you year after year with more plants and blooms. They are fragrant, make outstanding cut flowers, and are easily divided for friends, or to plant elsewhere in your yard. Leucojum, or Summer Snowflake, will remind you of Lily of the Valley with two important exceptions. First, Leucojum grows quite well here (Lily of the Valley doesn't) and it is not fragrant.

If fragrance is your driver, we will be getting a few specialty bulbs this year from a new grower and the fragrance will be unforgettable. In addition to all the fragrant Freesia hybrids, we will have the super fragrant Freesia Alba, white with a creamy yellow throat that is much more fragrant than the newer hybrids. It multiplies rapidly, and even seeds freely. We will also be getting some special *Amarcrinum*s that bloom with fragrant pink blossoms all summer long.

Additionally, we will have possibly the best Narcissus hybrid for the landscape ever! It is called Golden Dawn. Golden Dawn is a Narcissus and Spanish jonquil hybrid that is quite fragrant, often puts up successive bloom spikes which extend the bloom season, and is the fastest increaser you will find. These bulbs multiply at a rabbit-like rate!

New this year will also be some new colors of *Amaryllis Belladonna*, or Naked Lady bulbs. Instead of the plain pink color, this assortment will range from white to near red. Unfortunately they come in an assortment, so you won't know which color you have until it blooms next fall.

Also look for *Ranunculus*, Tulips, Hyacinths, the enormous *Urginea* or Sea Squill, and many, many more.

Many of the above will be limited in supply, so be sure to shop early for best selection.

Just plant 'em, and forget 'em! ■

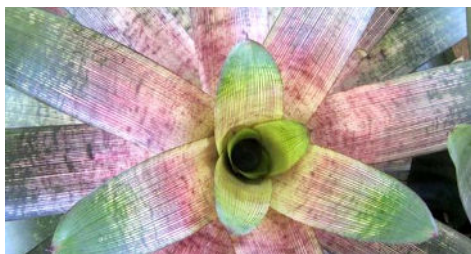


# Words

## From Walter

BY WALTER ANDERSEN, JR.

### Caring For Bromeliads



Bromeliads are some of the most colorful plants we can grow. There are many different varieties of Bromeliads. However for this article, we will be talking mostly about Aechmea, Ananas, Bilbergia, Guzmania, Neoregelia, and Vrieseas. These are also some of the easiest plants to grow. They do well indoors or out with a little protection from the sun, usually light to medium shade. They make excellent container plants. All of these plants have interesting showy blooms, or the foliage turns bright orange or red when mature. This colorful part of the plant will usually last many months.

Most of the Bromeliads are sold as houseplants, however they do well outdoors, as long as it does not get too cold in winter. Anything above 35 degrees F should be fine. Most folks grow them in small pots, usually from about 4" to 8", however some of the Vriesia varieties can get quite large, perhaps 3' across. Those may need larger containers to achieve their maximum size.

The potting mix should be well draining. There are more mix formulas than you can imagine. The most important part is it should have a good amount of organic substance that holds some moisture, but not stay consistently wet. Many growers use Fir Bark, probably the 1/4" size would be best. Coir chunks (coconut husk chips) should do well also. Some growers may add in a little planter mix usually containing some peat moss, to hold a little moisture, so they don't dry out too fast. Just plain soil from your yard is probably not the best choice.

One exception for our soil might be Ananas. This is the Pineapple family. Yes, Pineapples are Bromeliads. Many folks in mild southern California do grow Pineapples. Unfortunately it takes a long time for them to produce fruit.

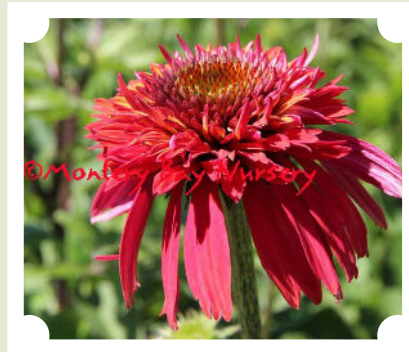
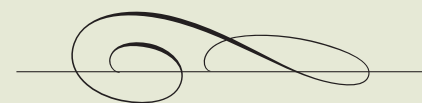
There is also a variegated form of Pineapple that is quite colorful and bright, usually green and yellow streaks with a tinge of pink.

Once a Bromeliad blooms, that part of the plant will eventually die. It may take several months to even a year before it dies. Nothing to fear, because in that time they usually send up pups, or small starts at the base of the parent plant. In time, these will continue to grow and eventually they can be taken off to make new plants. Let the pup get to about one-third to one-half the size of the parent plant. Then they can be cut off and started in a new container. When you cut the pup off, try to cut into the parent plant a little and get some roots with it if you can. This will ensure a faster start on the young plant. Most of these new starts should go into a 4" pot for a while. When larger, you can repot in to a 6" or 8" size to let it continue growing to a larger size.

Watering is usually pretty simple. The foliage on most of these plants forms a cup that holds water near the base of the leaf. Try to keep water in these cups most of the time. If you see the plant is dry, pour some water over the plant, it will collect in the cups. Water a little more so there is some runoff into the potting mix too. If the plants are outdoors, a light sprinkling with a hose two or three times a week should be fine in warm weather. Less often in cool winter months.

Feeding the plants will encourage faster and larger growth. You can use a water soluble fertilizer, we like Gro More Urea Free Formula, but use it at half the strength listed on the label. Apply this about once a month when watering. Another real simple way to fertilize is with GroPower Tablets. These are large pills you place on the soil mix in the pot, as you water they break apart and fertilize the plant. If you use the tablets, you only need to apply them about every three months.

Very few pests get on Bromeliads. Perhaps some aphids on the young tender foliage or bloom spike, which can be washed off with a fine spray of water, or with a house plant sprayer. If they are outdoors, check for snails and slugs, which can take chunks out of the foliage. Bait with Sluggo if you see signs of their activity. ■



### Belly Up To Try The Double Scoop

## Orangeberry!

BY MELANIE POTTER

How would you like to try a Double Scoop Orangeberry? While it sounds good enough to eat, we at Walter Andersen think it is good enough to plant!

That's because we're thinking of **Echinacea 'Double Scoop Orangeberry'**. From our friends at Monterey Bay Nursery, this is another excellent, new-generation hybrid, very close to 'Double Scoop Raspberry' in color but just a shade more orange and less magenta.

Echinacea, a North American genus in the Daisy family, has big, bright flowers that appear from early summer until the first frost. Also called Coneflowers, these thrive in average soils, hot and dry conditions, and are resilient in cold weather. Blooms last well, either cut or dried and the seed heads provide food for the birds.

This flower has fully double centers, and excellent, non-fading, strong red flower color. Great in the vase if you have enough left in the garden! Plant in full sun, in average soil, and provide regular watering. Dead-heading will prolong the flowering period.

We like this imposter of sorts because the many petaled centers are unusual and could cause it to be mistaken for a Zinnia or even Dahlia. ■



# September

## In-Store Specials!

Sale Prices good thru September 30, 2012

### \$5 Each! 5-Gallon Bush & Climbing Roses

Regular Price \$24.99

### 50% OFF Select 15-Gallon Roses

Poway Store only

### 25% OFF 5-Gallon & Larger Selected Fruit Trees!

Many varieties from which to choose including Walter Andersen's exclusive Corky's Honey Delight™ Figs!

### 50% OFF All 5-Gallon Grape Vines

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

## Dates To Remember

**LABOR DAY** – Open regular hours.

**SEPTEMBER 3** – Poway store hours change to 9am-5pm daily.

**OCTOBER 27-28** – Fall Rose Show at our Poway store.

## Bedding Tables Make Way For Fall

BY MELANIE POTTER

It's September, still warm outside, but the look and feel of summer is passing. Gone are the great color combinations that screamed summer as the shapes and colors that dominate autumn, harvests, and Thanksgiving are upon us.

At the nurseries, that means the bedding tables are full of Pansies, Violas, Stocks, and Snapdragons, all of which appreciate the cooler fall temperatures.

Snapdragons (or Antirrhinum) are members of the Foxglove family, and are native to the Mediterranean and southern Europe. Their botanical name is derived from the Greek 'anti', meaning like or similar, and 'rhinos', meaning a nose, which when put together refers to the snout-like shape of the flowers. There are tall (growing 1' to 3') varieties, so bear that in mind if planting with other plants that may be shorter. You will have options to plant shorter ones, however, as you can find border (6"-10") and intermediate (12"-20") varieties. Stocks can also be a taller growing flower and may grow 2'-2 1/2' tall, but you will find shorter types that grow to 12", or 10" plus. Stocks are best known for their spicy, sweet fragrance and as an excellent choice for flowerbeds and cut flower arrangements. Stocks will provide blooms in white, lavender and purple. Snapdragons are available in shades of white, yellow, rust, pink, orange, and red.



Pansies and Violas are very cold-tolerant plants. They easily handle temperatures down to the mid 20s and keep on blooming. If temperatures drop any lower, existing flower buds may be damaged, but the plants live on. Violas, growing no more than 6 inches tall, make good border plants or ground covers and do well in patio containers or window boxes. Violas have a sweet, nectar flavor and can be used as a colorful garnish on salads.

Pansies have a very fine, fibrous root system. When you ease them out of their pots, the outside of the root ball may be a mat of white roots. Make several shallow cuts through these roots to encourage outward growth. It is also important to plant them at the same depth they were growing. They don't do well when planted any deeper.

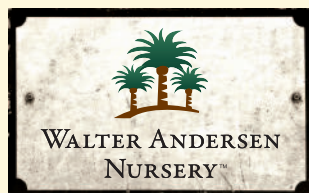
Pansies can be your partner in Halloween décor as you'll find them available in black, orange, and purple, as well as yellow, blue, white, combinations, and well, every color of the rainbow! ■

## September Garden Class Schedule

All 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. Class topics are subject to change with no notification. You may call for confirmation.

SAN DIEGO NURSERY   9:00AM		POWAY NURSERY   9:30AM	
9/1	Staghorn Fern Care & Remounting	9/1	Backyard Orchid Culture with Tom Spellman from Dave Wilson Nursery
9/8	Wonderful Interior Plants	9/8	Xeriscape with Carol Fuller
9/15	Introduction on Improving Soil	9/15	Fall Veggies with Richard Wright
9/22	Fall Bulbs	9/22	Fall Bulbs with David Ross
9/29	Attracting Butterflies, Bees & Hummers	9/29	Fall Rose Care with David Ross

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