



(858) 748-2254

## Home Gardener's NEWSLETTER

12237 Oak Knoll Rd.  
Poway, CA 92084

MARCH 2006  
Vol. 24 No. 2

PRSR STD  
US Postage  
PAID  
PERMIT NO 496  
Berkeley, CA



### March Gardening Tips

- 1. Begin relandscaping** or sprucing up your yard with new shrubs, trees, groundcovers, wildflowers, and annual and perennial flowers.
- 2. Prepare your flower beds** for maximum success. Loosen the soil and mix in *Kellogg's Earth Rich* and *Gro-Power* for the BIGGEST and BEST flowers you ever grew!
- 3. Choose roses**, "the queen of all flowers", now, from our large selection of hand-picked varieties.
- 4. Weed!** Ask us about weed killers for your different needs and get the jump on fast-growing weeds while they are young and tender.
- 5. Wait to prune** spring-blooming plants until after they bloom.
- 6. Check drip systems now**, flushing out sediments and algae.



### Groundcovers: The Sky's the Limit!

Use groundcovers to beautify a bare area, control erosion, and to reduce or replace a lawn area. The ideal groundcover is well suited to our climate as well as the microclimate in your garden. It grows densely but does not spread wildly beyond its boundaries.

Colorful ground covers include gazania, African daisy, and verbena...but you needn't limit your selection to plants labeled as groundcovers. There are many other attractive plants with the above attributes, plus they are low-growing (though uniform and sturdy) and require little maintenance.

In a sunny area, use spreading cotoneaster, dwarf daylilies, snow-in-summer, sedums, shrub roses, lower-growing ornamental grasses, and certain varieties of artemesia, baccharis, ceanothus, and lantana. In part shade plant hostas, ferns, and, liriopse.

Many low-care culinary herbs thrive as groundcovers, including mints, lovage, thymes, and rosemary. Don't discount vines as groundcovers. Some to plant include honeysuckle and trumpet vine.



### Feed Your Plants Now

Early spring is a critical time to fertilize. Roots are actively growing and it's important that a good supply of nutrients is available to them. (Roots begin actively absorbing even before plants leaf out.)

Here are some fertilizers you'll need:

⇒ **For fruit trees and citrus:** Use *Kellogg's Citrus & Fruit Tree Fertilizer*.

⇒ **For most other plants:** Use *Best Triple 16* all purpose fertilizer.

⇒ **For lawns:** Use *Best Turf Supreme*.

Use these high quality fertilizers and you will enjoy a beautiful, healthy garden in the seasons ahead.

### Snails & Slugs & Watering

You can minimize snail and slug damage by watering in the morning instead of the evening. In tests on lettuce leaves, researchers found that leaf consumption by these pests with morning watering was less than one-fifth of the consumption with evening watering. Drip irrigation may also help—it concentrates the water on each plant while keeping the surrounding soil moisture at a minimum.

Snails and slugs can devour young seedlings overnight, and do serious damage to the buds and leaves of mature plants. Use *Sluggo* to control them—this can be used safely around pets and wildlife.



It's Spring  
Planting Time!



**FREE PERENNIAL!**  
Come in and receive a FREE 4" perennial plant with any purchase!  
Choose delphinium, ranunculus, English daisy, and more!  
With this coupon. Expires March 31, 2006.

## Produce for your Plot



We all want to get the *most for our money* or *bang for our buck*; how about the *most produce for your plot*? Those who grow vegetables in a limited area use many strategies and devices to maximize production. An Ohio State University scientist is trying for a value of \$90,000.00 per acre using four designs and polyculture systems or "modular ecological designs".

Each design contains a mix of high-yielding, highly nutritional fruits and vegetables, including annual, perennial, tall and short crops in 45' x 60' plots. Crops are apples, peaches, tomatoes, green beans, strawberries, raspberries, blueberries, raspberries, and soybeans. Four designs are being tested in raised beds, each section combining the crops in a different arrangement: solid rows of single crops, or alternating crops and crop heights within the rows, or mixed.

The highest-yielding sections would be an excellent basis for small scale local food production. A single section could provide a family with much of its total produce needs, while additional sections would produce high value crops for local farmers' markets with maximum use of the land and reduced transportation time and costs.



## Facts on Fungi

Don't try to figure out Mother Nature, just go along with her and enjoy some of these interesting fungi facts...

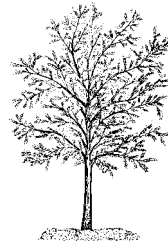
☉ The **corn smut fungus** produces huge growths on corn cobs which are served as a delicacy in top restaurants.

☉ Another fungus, **Botrytis cinerea**, kills many plants, however, when it infects grapes, it causes the "Noble Rot" that increases the sweetness and flavor of dessert wines.

☉ **Ergot fungus** of grains and grasses cause serious health problems and even death when the contaminated flour is consumed by humans, but it also produces alkaloids which reduce excessive bleeding and migraine headaches.

## Arbor Day—Plant a Tree!

Arbor Day celebrates trees and tree planting. The Nation's first Arbor Day was celebrated on April 10, 1872 in Nebraska at a time when that area of the country had almost no trees or forests. Over a million trees were planted that day. Here in California, **March 7th** is recognized annually as Arbor Day.



Besides making a garden much more enjoyable, trees benefit our fragile environment, and substantially increase our property values. We'll be glad to assist you in selecting the perfect trees for your landscape.

- **Climate.** We offer hand-selected trees that thrive in our climate, and even the particular microclimate where you'll be planting it.

- **Size.** Many trees grow rapidly, so make sure the ones you select will fit the space after a few years of growth. A tree that grows very large will eventually outgrow most landscapes. Also, select a tree that will not interfere with any utility wires.

- **Shape.** Tall, umbrella-shaped trees provide overhead shade, while those that grow vertically with lots of foliage from the ground up make good screens.

- **Deciduous or evergreen.** Deciduous trees lose their leaves during winter, letting sunshine and warmth into your home. Evergreen trees act as wind barriers and screens all year.

- **Special features.** You may like certain flower colors or other characteristics, such as good fall color

## Springtime Sesame Asparagus

20-24 asparagus spears  
2 Tbsp sesame seeds  
1 Tbsp sesame oil  
1 Tbsp soy sauce



2 Tbsp Aji-Mirin (or mirin)  
2 cloves garlic, minced  
2 tsp ginger root, minced or grated

In a small bowl, combine sesame seeds, oil, soy, mirin, garlic and ginger. Pour over asparagus. Place in a broiler pan and cook under the broiler 7-8 minutes until browned.

## Natural Rhythms

Our internal clocks tick away, influencing our daily lives and sleeping habits. The day-by-day patterns are known as circadian rhythms, and it turns out that animals and plants have these cycles, too. Many flowering plants not only have a **time of year** to bloom, but a **daily moment** in time to blossom as well.

Dandelions (hard working bloomers that they are!) open early, around 9am, and close by 5pm. The names of some flowers give you a clue: morning glories follow shortly thereafter—at about 10am, and close in the evening. Flowers on the branch ends of four o'clocks open at (you guessed it) four o'clock! Evening primroses take the later shift: open by 6pm and close by noon the next day.



Biologists note that the times that flowers are open also matches the schedules of their pollinators. Plus, many of these opening times are not in response to light—the flowers follow the patterns even when kept in the dark.

