



What's in a name?

Common names for plants can vary from one region to another, or from one culture to another. In school we learn to use **scientific names** in order to reduce confusion, and to align our research to a system understood by scientists around the world. But *these* may have limited value in everyday conversation. Why, for instance at a family gathering, why would I tell my bird-loving cousin I had seen a *Turdus migratorius* in her garden when I could simply say I saw a 'Robin'? And, just as birds are categorized for convenient discussion, so are plants.

18th century Swedish botanist Carolus Linnaeus set forth the rules for botanical nomenclature, which are still used for plant ID in this nursery. It involves a **binomial system**, *Genus + species*, for categorizing plants based on the structure of their flower parts. What makes this system so important to us at Berkeley Hort is that we can immediately narrow the field of possibilities to a single species or variety. I recall often being approached by nursery shoppers asking for 'Mock Orange', only to wonder whether they meant *Philadelphus*, *Choisya*, or *Pittosporum*.

Since botanical names can be formidable we might be reluctant to attempt their pronunciation, relying instead on the more familiar vernacular names. Many cultures have no need for taxonomic dogma, depending entirely on local names passed down from one generation to the next. On a global scale,

it would seem that the British have had the most influence on common plant-name usage, undoubtedly due to that country's deep history in, and enthusiasm for gardening, coupled with prolific writers in the genre.

What one calls a plant can be a matter of controversy. Some names are cute ('Biddy-Biddy'), some descriptive ('Snow-in-Summer') and some use derogatory terms for people (not here). Often-used suffixes include -bane, -berry, and a multitude of -worts. My wife found that the European succulent, *Sempervivum tectorum* is relatively easy to grow, and with its myriad variations and color forms, was worthy of collecting. Long ago these were planted on rooftops to reduce risk of house fires caused by lightning strikes. 'Houseleeks', 'Hens & Chicks', and 'Live Forever' are common names I had heard for these plants. Imagine my surprise when, thumbing through an English gardening journal I came across a reference to it as 'Welcome-Home-Husband-Though-Never-so-Drunk'. Look further along in this publication for some of my favorite **common names**. —Paul

BUSINESS HOURS

OPEN 9:00 am - 5:00 pm
(No entry after 4:40 pm)

CLOSED Thursdays & Sundays

WEEKEND SPECIALS

Sept 4-5
Roses

All sizes/varieties ~ 50% OFF

Sept 11-12
Bellingham Gloves

'Blue' all sizes ~ \$4.29 (reg. 5.99)

Sept 18-19
CA Natives

All sizes ~ 30% OFF

Sept 25-26
Camellias

All sizes ~ 30% OFF

Oct 2-3
Chrysanthemums

4-inch pots ~ \$2.79 (reg. 3.95)

Oct 9-10
Recipe 420 Potting Soil
1.5 cu. ft. bags ~ \$14.25 (reg. 18.99)

Oct 16-17
Happy Frog Fertilizers
4 lb. bags ~ \$10.25 (reg. 13.99)

Oct 23-24
Iceland Poppies
4-inch pots ~ \$1.99 (reg. 2.95)

Oct 30-31
Cover Crop Seeds
All varieties ~ 30% OFF

LIMITED TO STOCK ON HAND.
NO DELIVERIES ON SALE MERCHANDISE.

NEW ARRIVALS

Anemone hybrida

The Japanese Anemone announces the arrival of fall. These long-lived (sometimes invasive) perennials provide their floral display on cue during these months. Part shade is best, and with regular water you will almost surely have tall cutting flowers until frost. White, pink, lavender and various shades thereof.

#1 size cans \$14.95

Passiflora hybrids

We love these rampant show-offs, but you'll need lots of room if you plant one. Covering up to 30 feet of fence line in one season they make a dramatic statement. Check out 'Blue Horizon' and 'Quasar', both spectacular up close and at a distance.

#1 size cans \$19.95

Protea relatives

This large family of plants from the Southern Hemisphere includes *Adenanthos*, *Banksia*, *Grevillea*, *Leucadendron*, *Leucospermum*, *Protea*, *Isopogon*, and *Kunzea* among many others. Beloved by hummingbirds and cut flower enthusiasts, you will also notice them blooming in gardens around town at this time of year. We try to keep them in stock year-round but you'll have a hard time finding some varieties during the coldest, wettest winter months. All require good drainage, mild winters and no-phosphorus fertilizers. Collectible and spectacular.

#5 size cans \$59.95 to \$69.95



Common to whom?

Lesser-known common names — amuse your friends, frustrate our staff.

Common name

Botanical name

Hurt Sickle	<i>Centaurea cyanus</i>
Wonga-Wonga	<i>Pandorea pandorana</i>
Bunya-Bunya	<i>Araucaria bidwillii</i>
Chupachupa	<i>Ecchremocarpus scaber</i>
Cow-Itch	<i>Lagunaria patersonii</i>
Busy Lizzie	<i>Impatiens wallerana</i>
Stinking Benjamin	<i>Trillium grandiflorum</i>
Obedient Plant	<i>Physostegia virginiana</i>
May-Blob	<i>Caltha palustris</i>
Unkempt Boy	<i>Neoporteria heterophylla</i>
Mind-your-own-Business	<i>Soleirolia soleirolii</i>
Squirting Cucumber	<i>Ecballium elaterium</i>
Gingham Golf-Ball	<i>Euphorbia obesa</i>
Dents de Lion (dandelion)	<i>Taraxacum officinale</i>
Drunkard's Dream	<i>Hatiora salicornioides</i>

Common name

Botanical name

Nap-at-Noon	<i>Ornithogalum umbellatum</i>
Hug-me-Tight	<i>Ficus pumila</i>
Mother-in-law's Tongue	<i>Sansevieria trifasciata</i>
Lurk-in-the-Ditch	<i>Mentha pulegium</i>
Flower-of-an-Hour	<i>Hibiscus trionum</i>
Peace-in-the-Home	<i>Soleirolia soleirolii</i>
Kiss-me-over-the-Garden-Gate ...	<i>Polygonum orientale</i>
Never-Never Plant	<i>Ctenanthe oppenheimiana</i>
Snottygobble	<i>Persoonia longifolia</i>
Dead-rat Tree	<i>Adamsonia digitata</i>
Corpse Plant	<i>Monotropa uniflora</i>
Bloody-Butcher	<i>Trillium recurvatum</i>
Match-me-if-you-can	<i>Acalypha wilkesiana</i>
Vegetable Hummingbird	<i>Sesbania tripetii</i>
Dog Hobble	<i>Leucothoe fontanesiana</i>



Plant the peas please!

Fall is the best time to plant peas.

If you plant pea seeds or seedlings in October/November, the plant tops will continue to grow until day length shortens and temperatures drop. Then, with water from rain (hopefully) or your hose, the roots will continue to grow unseen. When the days lengthen and warm

up, you'll see a burst of top growth that's supported by those established roots. Usually you'll have flowers in January and ripe pods in February.

The other reason to start peas in the fall is the Bay Area's spring mildew scourge. If you start harvesting your peas in early spring, you will have had a decent crop by the time mildew takes over your plants. If you plant in February/March, you will just be starting your harvests when the coastal summer fog appears and creates the optimal conditions for mildew.

All of the above information applies to ornamental sweet peas, only the harvest will be bunches of colorful, fragrant flowers.

Planting and growing peas

While the soil temperature is still over 60°F you can plant pea seeds directly in the garden. If you have slugs and snails in your garden, you might prefer to buy seedlings that are less tender and vulnerable to these

creature's soft yet capable mouth parts. If birds bother your seedlings, hang some bird netting over bamboo stakes to deter them until the plants grow larger and less tender.

To support pole varieties, make a triangular tower of 3 poles. Push the ends firmly into the ground and tie the tops together. Wind some cotton string around the poles in rows about 6" apart for the pea tendrils to grasp as they climb. Use cotton so at the end of the season you can cut both string and dead vegetation and compost it all.

Bush peas grow only 2 to 4' tall. Using something to support them a bit can keep heavy rain from flattening them and make harvesting easier but isn't mandatory.

Separating shelling, snap and snow pea varieties will make it easier to tell when each is ready to harvest. And, the more you pick, the larger your harvest will be.

Ornamental sweet peas need support as well although you can be more creative with your trellising strategies. Grow up through an existing deciduous shrub, let clamber through your roses or create a sculptural grid with yard prunings. The more bouquets you pick, the longer you'll be able to.

Here are some of our favorite varieties available in the seed racks. Check the bedding plant section for seedlings.

Edible varieties

SUGAR SNAP ~ This sweet pole edible pod pea is harvested when the peas swell to fill the pod. Great to eat right off the vine and popular with children. Vigorous 5 to 6' vine. *Botanical Interests Seed Co.*

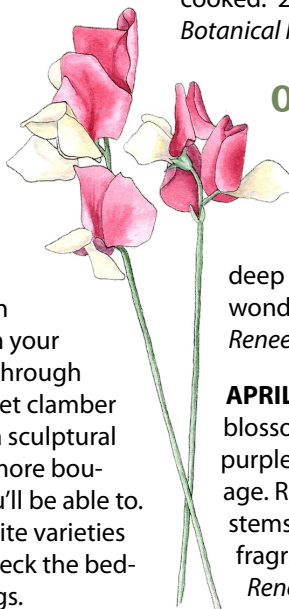
OREGON GIANT ~ This large pod bush snow pea is easy to grow. Pods are 5" long, sweet and crisp. Wonderful in salads and stir-fries. Plants are 3' high. *Renee's Garden Seeds*

GREEN ARROW ~ A bush shelling variety that sets slim pods. Inside are deep green peas that are equally good raw as lightly cooked. 2 to 3' vine. *Botanical Interests Seed Co.*

Ornamental varieties

PAINTED LADY ~ This fragrant, bi-color heirloom pole variety was introduced in 1737. Just a couple of the small white and deep rose flowers fill a room with their wonderful scent. *Renee's Garden Seeds*

APRIL IN PARIS ~ Cream-colored blossoms are tinted with bands of purple on the edges that widen with age. Robust 6' vines produce long stems, large flowers and a strong fragrance. *Renee's Garden Seeds*



'Make a Melica great again!'

Early November is a great time to sow seed for California native grasses like *Melica californica* and *Melica torreyana*, as well as *Festuca californica*, *F. rubra*, *Calamagrostis nutkaensis*, *Muhlenbergia rigens*, *Nassella pulchra*, etc. These species and other perennial bunchgrasses were a huge part of the state's original landscape, but they were largely overtaken by European annual grasses about 200+ years ago, with the arrival of settlers. Fortunately, the *Melicas* and other grasses have regained prominence in horticultural circles for their beauty, and in restoration landscaping for their important practical advantages such as habitat enhancement and erosion control.

This fall, elect to recreate a patch of California's original grasslands. We vote that you begin your grassroots effort by visiting Berkeley Horticultural Nursery and checking out our selection of Larner Seed Company's California native wildflower and grass seeds, including the great candidates mentioned above.

—Margaret

A Bulb Reminder

Everyone knows about planting bulbs for spring flowers, though they often don't remember until they actually see a host of golden daffodils in full bloom. Noteworthy varieties that are well-suited to our soil and climate, and often sell-out early are *Narcissus* 'Dutch Master', *Narcissus* 'Paperwhite Ziva', *Freesia* 'Single White', *Ixia maculata* mixed colors, and *Allium schubertii*. Now is also the time to plan for tulips and hyacinths, giving them time to chill in your fridge until planting later this winter. Berkeley Hort has an excellent selection! Check with us for the necessary accessories (bulb planters, bulb food, etc.) to prepare your garden for a glorious display next spring.

DR CHLOROPHYLL

ADVICE FOR THE HORTICULTURALLY HARASSED

(from the dustbin; this one had some religious overtones, but useful for some chuckles during a global pandemic.) Enjoy!

"The early bird gets the worm, but the second mouse gets the cheese."

"If everything seems to be going well, you have obviously overlooked something."

"A clear conscience is usually the sign of a bad memory."

SAY WHAT?

Dr. Chlorophyll's pal loaned him a copy of a now out-of-print gardening dictionary. Among the entries:

CARROT: Crunchy root vegetable the consumption of which is alleged to improve eyesight. The veracity of this folk belief is challenged to some degree by the large number of rabbit cadavers on streets and highways.

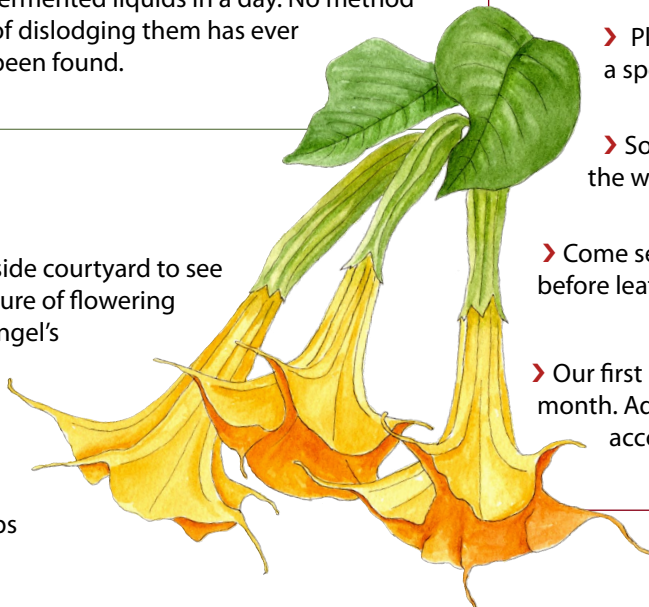
PEACHES AND PEARS: Everyone loves these trees, both for their fragrant flowers and their delicious fruit, but, alas, they are both afflicted with hundreds of diseases and disorders, including trunk drool, root slobber, bark slime, stem drizzle, mush wood, limb sludge, twig fuzz, craptip, crud leaf, petal smudge, sprout droop, munge, dampcurl, bud custard, splotchblossom, devil's whiskers, lobe dropsy, creeping dinge, gray gange, bunkle, sperl, flenge, munge, morbisy, and snet. The only practical preventive measure is to dispose of young plants immediately by burning or burying.

VERMICULITE: Obscure order of nuns dedicated to gardening. Like other devotional orders, the sisters take the traditional vows of chastity, poverty, and obedience, but in keeping with the demanding nature of their calling, the Vermiculites are the only such group with a special dispensation to drink, smoke, swear and throw things.

WASPS: Annoying pests deliberately introduced into much of North America from England during the 17th and 18th centuries. They have infested large areas of the U.S. and Canada, destroying millions of acres of lush forests and verdant plains and replacing them with their preferred habitat, a mixture of boxy dwellings, telltale spired religious structures, and desert like golf courses. Characterized by a low-pitched drone, an antlike industriousness, and extremely perfunctory mating behavior, they can generally drink their own weight in fermented liquids in a day. No method of dislodging them has ever been found.

Tropical Garden

On your next visit, take a walk over to our side courtyard to see the **tropical border**. This garden is a mixture of flowering plants in a jungle setting. Bamboos, Palms, Angel's Trumpets and Gingers form the structure, while brilliantly colorful exotics ramble and twine throughout. Water conserving it is not; but so far it has only required average garden water. The rest of the courtyard area is comprised of warm climate trees and shrubs around a Spanish style fountain patio.



THE GARDENER'S CALENDAR

September Checklist

- Deep-water young trees to reduce leaf scorch.
- It's harvest time. Share your bounty with friends, neighbors, coworkers.
- Visit farmer's markets; make notes of varieties for next year's edible garden.
- Make sure your garden is fire-safe. See us for recommendations.
- Withhold water from your Amaryllis (*Hippeastrum*) plants this month.
- Buy spring-blooming bulbs now. You can plant later if necessary.

October Checklist

- Give your potted plants a boost with Fish Emulsion.
- Our first 2021 calendars come this month!
- Plant Iceland Poppies now for a spectacular winter display.
- Sow your cover crop seeds as the weather cools down.
- Come see the new Japanese Maples before leaf-drop.
- Our first rain may come this month. Adjust your watering system accordingly.