

## Foliage Picks

When it comes to gardens, most of us usually first think in terms of flowers. That's only natural, given the joy that we get from them. We slow down and smell them, we cut them for decoration, we give them to our sweethearts, and they are cheerful. But in my mind what really gives the garden its character is its structure, and perhaps most importantly **foliage**. This includes size, texture, form, and contrast; all elements best provided by leaves. So, for this mid-summer issue I'd like to acknowledge the role that foliage plays in making a garden memorable.

Leaves can also have a role in olfactory stimulation. Smell plays a big part in the charm of garden memories; and floral fragrances have a deep history in the making of perfumes. When discussing the fragrance of 'flowers v. leaves', we used to typically say 'masculine v. feminine'. Now we just accept that a whole range of smells can be associated with a whole range of feelings. Leaves that have aromatic oils bring us the smell of Conifers, Mesquite, Rosemary, Sagebrush and any number of plants from our chaparral regions.

As to the use of foliage for color we touch upon a subject that could easily fill this newsletter. The dramatic gold of *Sedum m. 'Ogon'* and *Helichrysum 'Limelight'*, the deep reddish bronze tones of *Heuchera 'Palace Purple'* and *Lobelia fulgens*, or the striking silver of *Artemisia 'Powis Castle'* and *Stachys byzantina*.

From the dramatic to the understated you can choose vertical or horizontal, soft or sharp. What I really love is mixing forms and contrasting textures when planning the bones for my garden. I'm not advocating a garden devoid of flowers, rather a canvas where different brush strokes are being applied to the foundation of the art that is your garden.

What follows is a short list of a few of our favorite foliage plants. Look for them during your next nursery visit, and try a few of them in your garden. — Paul



### Dramatic/Bold

*Stipa gigantea* ..... Giant Feather Grass  
*Campanula pyramidalis* ..... Chimney Bellflower  
*Gunnera tinctoria* ..... Dinosaur Food  
*Sparmannia africana* ..... African Linden

### Delicate/Lacy

*Asparagus setaceus* ..... Emerald Feather  
*Acer palmatum 'Dissectum'* ..... Laceleaf Maple  
*Coreopsis verticillata* ..... Coreopsis Daisy  
*Chamaelaurium uncinatum* .. Geraldton Waxflower

### Aromatic

*Buxus spp.* ..... Boxwood  
*Thymus spp.* ..... Thyme  
*Escallonia spp.* ..... Escallonia  
*Cistus spp.* ..... Rockrose

### Spiky/Vertical

*Astelia n. chathamica* ..... Silver Spear  
*Salvia uliginosa* ..... Bog Sage  
*Physostegia virginiana* ..... Obedience Plant  
*Miscanthus s. 'Strictus'* ..... Porcupine Grass

**We will be closed on Sunday, July 4  
in observance of Independence Day.**

**Enjoy!**

**Hours: 9:00 am to 5:00 pm.**

**No entry after 4:50 pm.**

**Closed Thursdays**

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## WEEKEND SPECIALS

**July 2-3**

**Ground Covers**

cell packs ~ 30% OFF

**July 9-11**

**Dogwoods**

all sizes ~ 30% OFF

**July 16-18**

**Deciduous Fruit Trees**

all sizes ~ 50% OFF

**July 23-25**

**EcoForms Pots**

all styles/colors ~ 25% OFF

**Jul 30-Aug 1**

**Salvias** (flowering sages)

#1 size pots ~ 30% OFF

**Aug 6-8**

**MaxSea Plant Foods**

1.5 lb canisters ~ \$16.50 (reg. 21.99)

**Aug 13-15**

**Japanese Maples** (*Acer*)

all varieties ~ 30% OFF

**Aug 20-22**

**Vines**

30% OFF ~ #1 size & larger

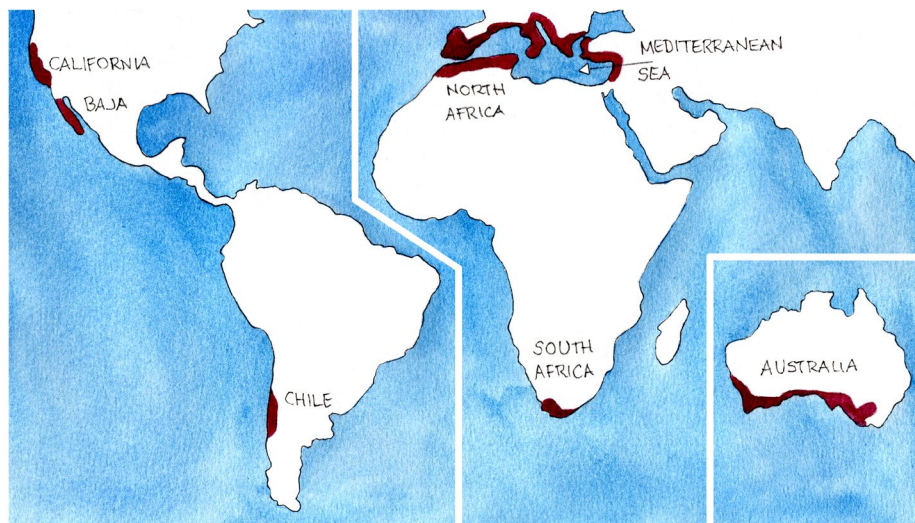
**Aug 27-29**

**Grasses**

#1 size pots ~ 30% OFF

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

# Put your garden on a Mediterranean diet



With the summer months upon us, it's clear those of us in California are living in a dry summer/wet winter climate. This weather dynamic along with specific ocean currents and winds defines the 'Mediterranean Climate'. Covering only 2-3% of the world's land mass, it's a special place to live.

Other countries with Mediterranean Climate regions are Mexico (parts of Baja California), the central coast of Chile and parts of Argentina, twenty-one European and Middle Eastern countries that touch the Mediterranean Sea, three North African countries: Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia, as well as the Cape Provinces of South Africa, and south and west Australia.

Plants native to this climate are generally drought tolerant, and sometimes dry season dormant. Many have evolved strategies to survive the lack of precipitation with succulent, light colored, or furry leaves to reduce transpiration. Most require well draining soil to make it through the wet winters without succumbing to root rot. Some have adapted to the fires that frequent these regions because of the long dry spells.

As you add or replace plants in your garden, try working with, not against the climate we live in by using plants that thrive with less frequent watering in the summer and wet winters. Plants, trees and succulents native to California as well as other Mediterranean regions around the world are well represented in most sections of the nursery.

The following are just a few to consider:

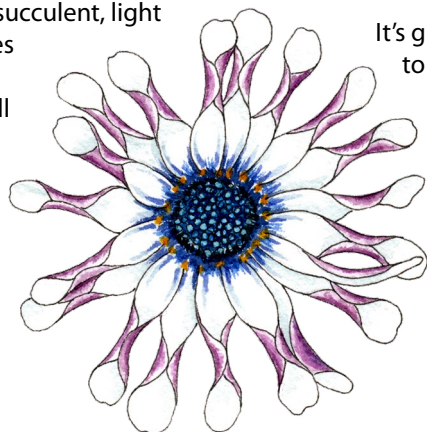
**Western South America:** *Alstroemeria*, *Calandrinia spectabilis*, *Bougainvillea*

**South Africa:** *Leucospermum*, *Watsonia*, *Kalanchoe*, *Osteospermum*

**North Africa:** *Papaver rupifragum*, *Lemon Balm*

**Southern Europe:** *Santolina*, rosemary, thyme, lavender

**South + West Australia:** *Anizoganthus*, *Banksia*



It's great to feel connected to all these other special places in the world by discovering and surrounding ourselves with their native plants. And it's the easiest path to a beautiful, thriving low maintenance garden. —Helen

# Plan for Bulbs to Return

As a footnote to Helen's article, we want to remind you that Flower Bulbs that hail from Mediterranean climate zones around the world are great for naturalizing in our area. Flower bulbs are storage organs that hold food reserves, enabling them to push up quickly and compete successfully with other plants. They also carry the plant through dormancy (in this case late summer) and allow the glorious seasonal show to proceed without the need for special conditions.

Bulbs from these areas tend to grow at least roots during our cool, wet winters; enter a period of dormancy during our hot, dry summers and bloom either fall or spring (with some notable exceptions in summer). The majority of our bulb inventory will arrive in September and October. Popular genera from these regions are *Watsonia*, *Ixia*, *Sparaxis*, *Amaryllis*, *Babiana*, *Gladiolus*, *Muscari*, *Cyclamen*, *Allium*, and *Iris*.

Check back with our sales staff as new bulbs begin to arrive this fall; we expect to receive many Mediterranean climate varieties then.

## Garden Myths & Misconceptions (shattered)

All of the following are things I've learned. Some exceptions can be found, but they are all generally false statements.

- ❶ A branch will rise as the trunk to which it is attached grows.
- ❷ Venus flytraps help to control flies.
- ❸ Plastic milk or bleach bottles scare dogs away.
- ❹ "Organically Grown" costs more.
- ❺ Bougainvilleas are easy to transplant.
- ❻ There are plants deer will not eat.
- ❼ Always prune deciduous trees when they are dormant.
- ❽ Bigger means better.
- ❾ A layer of pebbles in the bottom of the pot aids drainage.
- ❿ Making compost is a painstaking chore.

## NEW ARRIVALS

### *Rudbeckia hirta*

It attracts butterflies, honeybees and other pollinators, it blooms from summer through fall, it is not attractive to deer, and it prefers a warm sunny spot.

**Black-Eyed Susans** have been popular for centuries, for good reason. Plants are short-lived but will come back from self-sown seeds.

**4 inch pots**     **\$7.95**  
**#1 size cans**   **\$14.95**

### *Heuchera hybrids*

Consulting my botanical pronunciation guide I find, *hoy ka ra*; not at all the way I have been saying it! Regardless of what we call them, these **Alum Roots** are spectacular foliage plants for the shade garden. Colors range from chartreuse to peach, to blackish purple.

**4 inch pots**     **\$6.95 to \$12.95**

### *Epilobium canum*

Most gardeners know this as Zauschneria, or California Fuchsia. Either way, it makes a great addition to the dry garden. Once established it will prefer to NOT be irrigated. Scarlet flowers make for hummingbird heaven!

**#1 size cans**     **\$14.95 to \$16.95**

### *Fuchsia hybrids*

We recall the hordes of customers and enthusiasts coming to the nursery in the '50's and '60's during the late summer and fall every year to see the thousands of Fuchsia plants and displays. Hanging baskets in full bloom as far as the eye could see, and new varieties being introduced every year...those were exciting times. Then, in the 1980's a microscopic mite wiped out virtually all of our stock plants, and we were in mourning.

Now, with a decline in the mite population and new resistant forms **THEY'RE BACK.**

**4 inch pots**   **\$6.95 to \$10.95**  
**#1 size cans**   **\$14.95 to \$16.95**

### *Mimulus aurantiacus* hybrids

The CA Native Sticky Monkeyflower is a classic dryland shrub that will thrive with minimal water and good drainage. Over the past two decades many showy colors have been selected, ranging from white or cream to yellow, orange, copper, salmon, red and maroon. They can be pruned during the summer to rebloom. Full sun is best but they'll tolerate part shade.

**4 inch pots**   **\$6.95 to \$10.95**  
**#1 size cans**   **\$14.95 to \$16.95**

## THE GARDENER'S CALENDAR

### July Checklist

- Mulch the soil around vegetable plants for water conservation.
- Check your water garden to see that it is clear and free of mosquito larvae.
- Tropical plants will benefit from extra feeding during these warm months.
- Feed acid-loving plants with Cottonseed Meal or Fish Emulsion.
- Deadhead and feed early-flowering perennials for a second bloom.

### August Checklist

- Dig and divide Bearded Irises now (also check our selection).
- Last chance for Summer Pruning of fruit trees.
- Remove canes from Berry Plants that have already fruited (raspberries, etc.)
- Include your garden when making vacation plans. What happens when you are away?
- Deep-water winter/spring flowering shrubs, as now is when the buds are initiating.



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## THE SEED CORNER

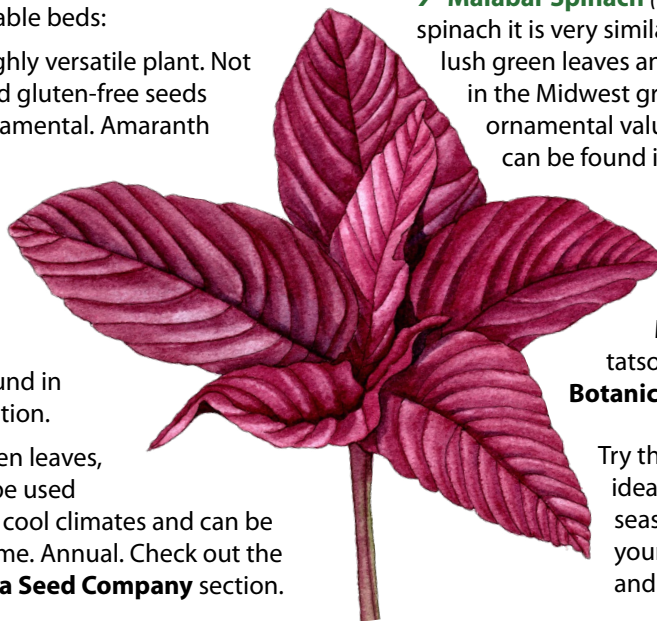
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### Great Greens for the Summer Garden

Many leaf vegetables can be challenging to grow during summer months, especially if your garden lacks shade. Longer day light hours induce early seed set, (bolting) in most leaf vegetables. While there are a few cultural practices that will discourage these plants from bolting at this time of year, it is easier to simply grow greens that prefer the warmer months. Try these tasty salad greens in your summer vegetable beds:

› **Amaranth** (*Amaranth spp.*) is a highly versatile plant. Not only does it have edible leaves and gluten-free seeds but it can also be grown as an ornamental. Amaranth tricolor is commonly grown for its edible leaves which are high in protein, potassium, and other nutrients. Amaranth leaves are used in many Caribbean and Asian dishes. Tender new leaves make a perfect addition to most salads. Try 'Red Leaf' Amaranth found in the **Kitazawa Seed Company** section.

› **Sorrel** (*Rumex acetosa*) Bright green leaves, sour + lemony flavor. Leaves can be used as herb or salad green. Likes mild, cool climates and can be harvested over a long period of time. Annual. Check out the variety 'Large Leaf' in the **Kitazawa Seed Company** section.



› **Miner's Lettuce** (*Claytonia perfoliata*) Edible native. Leaves, flowers, and roots can be eaten. Contains vitamins C & A, and iron. Can also act as ground cover or understory for shade-providing trees. Leaves have mild, spinach-y taste. Look for packets in our **Larner** Section.

› **Malabar Spinach** (*Basella alba*) while not technically spinach it is very similar in flavor. It is a gorgeous vine with lush green leaves and a magenta stem. My mother back in the Midwest grows malabar spinach purely for its ornamental value. Seeds for this gorgeous tasty vine can be found in the **Seed Saver's Exchange** section.

› **Endive** (*Cichorium endivia*) adds texture to salads, has a mild flavor. Can also be used as ornamental in gardens. Does well in mild climates. May be planted with mustard, radicchio, tatsoi. Find "Olesh Tres Fine" Endive in the **Botanical Interests** section.

Try these greens even if your garden has ideal locations for growing year round cool-season crops. They will diversify many of your dishes with their unique colors, flavors, and textures. Happy Summer Seeding!

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## MEET THE STAFF

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These two have worked at Berkeley Hort for so long now, that we are re-introducing them. Say "hello" on your next visit.

### Marcelles Walker



Early in 2004, we received an employment application from a quiet, and very respectful Berkeley High student; he turned out to be a diligent worker on Saturdays and the occasional weekday afternoon. After graduation, Marcelles added some hours and became an integral part of our yard crew, unloading trucks, moving plants, watering, and assisting with customer carry-outs. Music

(mainly gospel), ministry, college courses, and relocation to Southern California took this young man away for a year or so, but he returned in 2010 and we're glad he did! Now, he is indispensable as a seasoned nurseryman; one who helps buyer Priska process our Thursday deliveries of packaged soils, fertilizers, tools, trellises, stakes, hoses and most other garden accoutrements. Always on time (even early), with an easy smile, a musical temperament, a willing heart, and cheerful demeanor; Marcelles is a joy to work with!

### Che Salas



Practicality is something we are always searching for at BHN, and after seeing the resumé of this handyman I knew we wanted to meet him. Credentials included many years as the caretaker for a large and remote ranch deep in the mountains of Carmel Valley. Designing and maintaining an extensive landscape including irrigation, fruit orchard, lawn, masonry and soil conditioning; maintaining cabins,

barns and surroundings including construction, electrical, plumbing, and firewood supply; maintaining pools, generators, a 4 mile unpaved road, all vehicles and power equipment; and boarding horses, including feeding, health, tack maintenance; all of this occasionally done in adverse conditions of extreme heat, freezing cold, and oh yeah...he was alone! Currently, Che acts as our main plant buyer, communicating with dozens of growers about availability of trees, shrubs, and perennials. Ask him about our selection of Fruits and Berries at BHN and watch him light-up with an enthusiasm for edibles that is truly contagious!