

BERKELEY HORTICULTURAL NURSERY

GARDENING SUGGESTIONS

Mar | Apr
2022

The Canine Conundrum

Last year, as did so many other people, I adopted a puppy. Over one year of COVID shutdown meant more time at home and no plans to travel; the time seemed right to add a third member to our family. But there was one element of dog-parenting that I had forgotten.

At the time of this publication little Juno is 16 weeks old, has huge paws and sharp teeth, loves to dig, and has an insatiable appetite for rocks, sticks, grass, and almost anything humans find repulsive. She can be a perfect angel or an absolute terror. These tendencies pose a serious question: How can I keep my garden?

In my garden one of the first things I did was to identify any toxic plants and either remove them or move them to places not accessible to her. Angel's Trumpet, *Datura wrightii* has been a charming volunteer around the garden, but now I remove the seedlings before they bloom. Nightshades, *Solanum* and other berry-producing plants in this family are pulled up asap. Many plants

around my yard could be toxic if ingested in large enough quantities, including Lavender or Lemon Balm but I focus on removing

plants that produce toxic fruits or seeds as these are more potent and more attractive to dogs.

Experienced gardeners know the advantages of adding compost to garden beds. This becomes a bit of a problem when you have a little canine snarfler roaming freely. Here is where the art of compromise comes into play. Some spaces must be allowed for puppy activities, while others are strictly off-limits. A short leash can help while passing through areas with fresh soil toppings, and I am finding that it helps to keep her out of areas where I have been digging or planting, for at least 24 hours. This reduces the temptation; but only somewhat. In the mean time we regularly attend puppy school, and wait for her to settle into adult life and find other interests.

On another note, I plan to spend extra time at the nursery this year to help with anniversary events. The musical kickoff for our new stage will be in late April, but it may be called upon to support trees and shrubs; especially fruits. Check in weekly to see what's happening.

—Paul



New hours beginning March 13th: 9:00 am to 5:00 pm

No entry after 4:50 pm • Closed Thursdays

510-526-4704 • berkeleyhort.com

mail@berkeleyhort.com

WEEKEND SPECIALS

March 4-6

Ranunculus Plants

4 in. pots ~ \$3.99 (reg. 5.95)

March 11-13

Gardner & Bloome Fertilizers

4 lb. bags ~ \$9.00 (reg. 11.99)

March 18-20

Outdoor Ferns

1 gallon and larger ~ 30% OFF

March 25-27

Herbs (Organic)

3½ in. pots ~ \$4.99 (reg. 6.00)

April 1-3

Hats

all styles/sizes ~ 30% OFF

April 8-10

Terra Cotta Pottery

all sizes ~ 25% OFF

April 15-17

Conifers

all sizes ~ 25% OFF

April 22-24

Gloves

all sizes ~ 25% OFF

April 29 - May 1

Tomato Seedlings (Organic)

3½ in. pots ~ \$4.49 (reg. 6.00)

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

From 0 to 67 in 1.5

A year and a half ago, when I started working at Berkeley Hort, I had zero houseplants. I didn't understand the appeal. Why bring a plant inside? How rude! Plants live outdoors, where the soil is. In the earth. Right?

But Berkeley Hort changed me. At last count I had 67 of the little beauties in various stages of growth.

It started innocently enough. A scrap of *Tradescantia zebrina* that fell to the floor during a houseplant delivery. Poor plant, I thought, maybe I can save it. Into a damp paper towel the scrap went. I brought it home in my empty lunch container and put the ravaged end into a glass of water. Well, it didn't take long to root, and that easy success spurred me on. I couldn't wait till the next delivery day to see what other bits broke off in transit!

A fat lobe of Hope (*Peperomia*), a String of Tiny Turtles (also *Peperomia*), a Hobbit toe (*Crassula ovata*), pieces of Pothos and Philodendrons... whatever scraps I found on the greenhouse floor became experiments in my plant lab (aka, sunny window-sill.)

I heard you could grow a *Sansevieria* from a piece of leaf. No way, I thought. A scrap of leaf can grow a whole plant? So when a damaged leaf had to be removed I cut a 2" piece off, took it home, and buried the bottom half in soil. That little scrap sat and sat, and I had little faith anything would happen. It took 4 months but a shoot finally appeared, and now I have a small *Sansevieria zeylanica* of my own. I've learned that patience and faith are paramount when propagating.

Now it's plants inside, everywhere! Plants liven up my windowsills, tables, cabinets, bookcases and shelves. I cheer on the little sprouts when they pop up from the soil. I patiently watch new leaves as they slowly uncurl. Having plants inside means I start every day with joy and hope, grateful for nature and life. Watching plants grow is awe-inspiring. If you haven't tried gardening indoors, consider bringing a small plant into your home. But be warned, you just might get addicted, too. —Amy



Come celebrate with us

As you read this we have started a calendar listing the many events at the nursery in 2022. You'll find information about **Free Gifts for Customers, Merchandise Raffles, Speakers, Workshops, Food and Live Music.**

Go to: berkeleyhort.com/events/1922-to-2022/ or scan this QR code for details.



Plan your nursery visits. There will be something for everyone!

THE SEED CORNER

Spring is right around the corner and it is a very exciting time of the year for me. It's time to chop down the cover crops. Some people leave the chopped cover crops right on their beds to decompose and work back down into the soil. I prefer to take the cuttings to the compost pile. The process of decomposition uses up some of the nitrogen from the soil and I want my soil to keep as much nitrogen as possible for use on my new seedlings.

During the cold, wet days of winter lots of plans were made for my garden. Seeds have already been started indoors for early planting-out. During early March, I'll continue to start seeds indoors until I'm pretty sure we won't be getting any more freezing weather. But at this time of year, many seeds can be sown directly into the ground. I will plant the lettuce, carrots, beet, radishes, chives and spinach seeds right into the garden. I find the sunniest spot in the garden so that the soil is slightly warmer and plant away. After the first seedlings come up I thin them and plant more seeds, so that I'll have a continuous crop.

If you've picked the sunniest spot in your garden, you may need to provide a little shade for your lettuce when the weather gets progressively warmer. We carry a permeable fabric (row cover) that can be supported with stakes along the sides of the seed beds. This provides some shade but allows air to circulate and helps keep the lettuce cool and slows down bolting. You can also use the permeable fabric at the time of planting to protect the young seedlings from frost and cold.

Whether you choose single varieties or mixes, we have lots of both. Just get out there and sow!

Happy Spring.

—Jeanne

The Rock

Children visiting the nursery sometimes discover an interesting spot that many adults miss, namely the large red rock that anchors the southwest corner of the nursery. It sits under a **25 foot** Monterey pine that has wrapped parts of the rock with thick, barky roots. The **pine sprouted in the 1930s** but the rock's been here even longer, perhaps as long as **200 million** years. Those of us who work at the nursery pass by the rock at least a dozen times a day, stopping sometimes to picnic at its base, but mostly ignoring this ancient heap of what geologists call Franciscan sandstone. It's basically a small piece of the ocean floor that moved up onto land during the Mesozoic era. Coastal prairie grasses and wildflowers grew around it for millennia, but about 200 years ago, cattle, crops and European grasses took over the neighborhood. In 1922, when George Budgen bought land for his nursery, the rock was surrounded by pasture, and if you stood on top of the rock you could throw a stone and hit tracks of the old Key system trunk line.

Waves of horticultural fashion have lapped at the base of the rock since the nursery opened in 1922: Fuchsias, Hollywood junipers, Vireya rhododendrons, hydrangeas, perennials, camellias, etc. Today, the sunny side of the rock is a backdrop for many varieties of sun shrubs, and its shady side is a stage for cans of California native ferns and other shade plants, such as (in early August) Thimbleberry, Huckleberry, Salal, Wild Ginger, and Yerba Buena, the minty groundcover which gave its name to that big rock in the bay, Yerba Buena Island. On your next visit to the nursery, take a stroll back to see the rock. While not as thrilling as a trip to the big red rock called Mars, this one is easy to walk to, it's surrounded by beautiful living plants and animals, and there's no shortage of fresh water nearby.

—Margaret

NEW ARRIVALS

Echeveria hybrids

Commonly known as Hens and Chicks, they come in many colors ranging from gray or green to creamy pink or rose. Many have crinkled leaves. One of our favorites is 'Perle Von-Nuremberg', which has succulent leaves that start out bright pink, then fade to a charming lavender-purple. Excellent in the dry garden.

4-inch pots **\$7.95 to \$10.95**

#1 size cans **\$16.95 to \$22.95**

Daphne odora

If you don't care for intense floral fragrances this might not be for you. Nosegay clusters of small pink to red flowers appear on the branch ends throughout the winter months. Prefers a bit of mid-day shade. Selected forms offer variegated leaves or increased vigor. All require good drainage.

#1 size cans **\$26.95**

Bougainvillea

When in full bloom, these colorful South American native vines never fail to stop us in our tracks! We call our Bougainvillea Display 'The Candy Shop'. They make a showy addition to a warm, sunny wall or entryway. A few varieties are even available in a shrub or patio tree form.

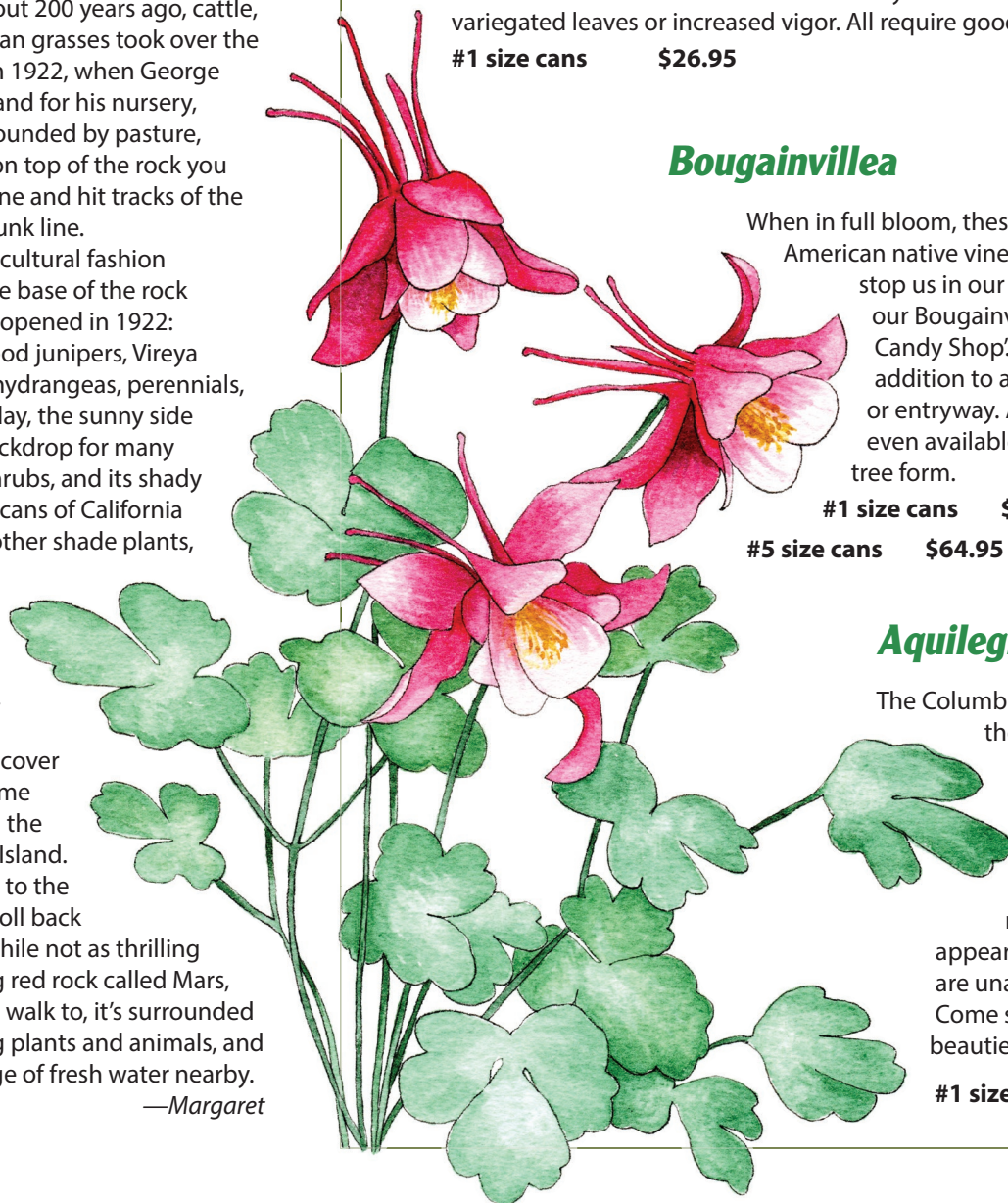
#1 size cans **\$22.95**

#5 size cans **\$64.95**

Aquilegia hybrids

The Columbines conjure up thoughts of cool spots with running water. Keep that in mind when planning a location in your garden. So many new hybrids appear each year that we are unable to keep up. Come see these woodland beauties.

#1 size cans **\$16.95**



Remembering Rosemary

There's no mistaking the fragrance of this wonderful herb. It makes sense that it is a member of the *Lamiaceae* family, which includes other aromatic delights like basil, mint, lavender, thyme & more! The botanical name *Rosmarinus officinalis*, translates to "mist of the sea". The grey-green foliage of this hardy shrub is thought to resemble the fog against the Mediterranean coastal cliffs, where it is native to. Because it thrives in a climate with dry summers and mild, wet winters, Rosemary is widely grown throughout Southern Europe & our beautiful West Coast.

Ancient Cuneiform stone tablets from 5000 BC were found mentioning Rosemary. It was also later documented to be used during early Egyptian burial rituals, by Greek & Roman botanists, and in traditional Chinese medicine. Eventually, this easy-to-grow, attractive & useful plant was cultivated in gardens throughout the world hence making its way onto many heirloom recipes.

Rosemary oil is now commonly used in perfumes, shampoos and cleaning products, worldwide. It is also proven

to have many uses medicinally, which include as an anti-inflammatory, for digestive relief, improving memory, cancer prevention & treatment and many more. Of course, the flavoring of Rosemary in cooking makes it a staple in almost every kitchen. It is my "go to" grilling herb.

The prolific blue (sometimes pink or white) flowers & various forms, make Rosemary a diverse addition to just about any landscape. They do best with well-draining soil and lots of warm sun. Upright forms make great hedges or screens. Spreading forms are a hardy, fast-growing groundcover, or an attractive "spiller" in containers. Because they can bloom throughout the year in our climate, any form will attract bees, butterflies, hummingbirds and people.

We supply many varieties of Rosemary year-round, in different sized pots. 'Barbeque' and 'Tuscan Blue' are excellent tall forms. 'Huntington Carpet' and 'Irene' are a couple of our favorite spreading forms. You can take a look (and a whiff!) of them in our Organic Herbs, 4" Sun, or the Sun Shrubs Sections.

Have fun in the Garden! —Che

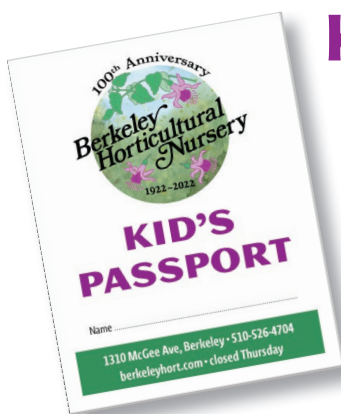
THE GARDENER'S CALENDAR

March Checklist

- › Herbs are in good supply for early planting. Groom or divide your established plants.
- › As perennials begin growing, protect the new shoots from slugs and snails. Consider evening escargot hunts.
- › Check your watering system for leaks. If automatic, set at low until our weather warms up.
- › You'll still find an excellent selection of Camellias at the nursery.
- › Start using your compost as surface mulch around shrubs and perennials.

April Checklist

- › Plant Tomatoes! Our selection peaks over the next 6 weeks.
- › Treat yourself to a new garden hat as the sun reaches higher in the sky.
- › Prune deciduous flowering shrubs (Lilac, Flowering Quince, Forsythia) during or after bloom.
- › Feed acid-loving plants like Camellias, Azaleas and Rhododendrons for growth.
- › *Narcissus* (Daffodil) leaves should be allowed to wither naturally after the bloom. Tie them back, but don't remove them yet.



Kid's Passport Program

We want to be sure to include everyone in our 100th anniversary celebration, so we've created a series of 6 garden-related activities for kids from 7 to 12. Younger ages may need some adult help. Here's how it works:

Come into the Nursery and pick up a Kid's Passport. Every month there will be a new activity posted on our website.

Go to berkeleyhort.com/100th-anniversary/kids/ (or use the QR code below)

Download the instructions and start having fun. When you have completed the activity, bring it (or a photo of it) to the Nursery and show it to a staff member near the checkout line. They will stamp your passport.

While the activities will be posted the first of each month from March through August, you can complete them in any order you wish, at any time, as long as they are all finished by **Kid's Day** on September 10, 2022. Then, bring your fully stamped passport to the Nursery and get a free Berkeley Hort 100th Anniversary t-shirt or cap!

We hope you'll enjoy the fun challenges in this program.

