

Flowercraft Garden Center

San Francisco's #1 Nursery

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HOME

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GARDENER'S NEWSLETTER

June Success Tips

1. We are stocked full of blooming plants that thrive in the warmer weather ahead. Some are proven performers for our area, and others are superior new varieties. New plants are arriving weekly—so come in often!



2. This is an excellent time to plant warm-season vegetables. Feed growing vegetables regularly with *EB Stone Organics Tomato & Vegetable Food*.

3. Check your irrigation system now to prepare for warmer months ahead. Turn it on, making sure all heads are adjusted properly and aren't being blocked by foliage. Check your drip systems to be sure emitters are not clogged. More emitters may need to be added as the plants grow and their roots spread out—we have these in stock!

4. Prune plants this month to cause them to grow fuller, with more blooms. This is a secret that works on many plants, but is especially important on petunias, fuchsias, and chrysanthemums.

5. House plants are growing vigorously now, so be sure you are feeding them regularly.

6. Father's Day is unique this year—it is June 21, the same day as Summer Solstice. Come in and we'll help you find a special gift for this special day! We have **plants, tools, gift cards**, and more!

Container Gardens Beautify Summer!

June is "Container Garden Month"! Our nursery is filled this month with lots of colorful flowers with the perfect containers to plant them in.

Your container: Choose larger containers because these don't dry out as quickly, and they allow for deeper root systems. Glazed and plastic pots will retain water better than terra cotta or wood containers, but be mindful that dark-colored pots exposed to full sun all day may become too hot for tender roots.

The potting mix! *Edna's Best Organic Potting Soil* ensures strong and vigorous root growth.

Filling your container: Try a mass of a single kind of plant in one color, or create a miniature garden. The three potting-up principles are 1) a taller, larger plant for the center, 2) encircled by sturdy plants, and 3) plants that drape around the edges.

Classic favorites: *Geraniums, dwarf margarites, felicias, coreopsis, and ornamental grasses and flaxes* make beautiful center focal points. Add lower growing annuals such as *ageratums, impatiens, phlox, celosia* or *dwarf zinnias*. We also have colorful foliage plants to add in. Finish off with *bacopa, million bells, ivy geraniums, or lobelia*—these all will gracefully cascade over the sides.

For edible container gardens our *vegetables, strawberries, blueberries, herbs, dwarf fruit trees* and *dwarf citrus* excellent choices.



Invite Bathing Beauties to your Yard

Are you one of the 40 million backyard birdwatchers? If not, you can join this growing phenomenon with a little birdscaping. Many birds eat their weight in bugs each week! Birds especially need fresh, clean water for drinking and bathing now that summer is here.

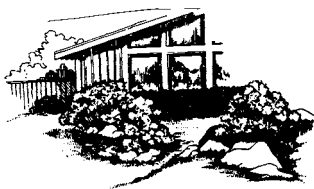


Birdbaths that are 18 inches across will generally be used by one bird at a time. Baths 24 inches or larger will attract a larger numbers of birds to bathe together.

Most birds prefer water far enough from vegetation to offer protection from a surprise attack, yet like vegetation nearby so they can quickly take cover.

Come in today and choose a birdbath for your feathered friends!

Mulch is Wonderful Stuff!



Mulch is a powerful tool in the hands of a gardener. By doing a simple thing like mulching, you can easily **save water** because mulch cuts down water evaporation from the soil surface. Mulch keeps the soil more uniformly moist and temperature-consistent, which improves root growth. Mulch improves the soil as it decomposes, and encourages beneficial earthworms. It gives a "finished" appearance to a landscape, making it look much more attractive and professional. Best of all, it's a natural resource that cuts down on weed growth, which saves hours of back-breaking work weeding. Mulch is a winner!

We have several kinds of mulch to choose from. Ones we particularly like are our *Cocoa hulls* (ideal for sunny spots—this prevents problems with dogs, cats, snails and slugs) and our new *Mulch Block*. Use these to mulch around all trees, shrubs, vegetable and flower beds, etc. Mulch should generally be 2-3 inches thick. Renew mulch each year to maintain that thickness.

TIP: Weed eaters and lawn mowers easily damage young trees, and even mature trees that have thin bark. Mulch around tree bases to create a buffer zone, but leave a gap between the trunk and mulch so the bark at the base of the tree can dry out.

It's Easy to be Water-Wise!

You can enjoy a beautiful garden and use less water at the same time! **HERE'S HOW:**

✓ **Group plants** according to their water needs, rather than mixing plants with high and low water requirements.



✓ **Mulch, mulch, mulch!** Add mulch around plants to reduce surface evaporation and discourage thirsty weeds.

✓ Use a **drip system or soaker hose** where practical, or water in the early morning to reduce loss from evaporation.

✓ **Choose drought-tolerant plants** or plants native to our area. We'll help you find them!

✓ **Minimize your grass lawn area** by replacing a portion of it with ground covers.

✓ **Water deeply and less frequently**—this encourages roots to grow deep and also reduces surface evaporation.

Lawn Love Affair

Forty years after the invention of the lawnmower in 1830, homes surrounded by cultivated lawns became the American ideal. Lawns continue to be cherished today and are an important part of most landscapes, though they are smaller than before.

We currently have new and improved cultivars never dreamed of back then! The newer varieties we carry also *use less water*



and are far *more resistant to pests* than lawns planted as recently as 15 years ago.

There are eight grass characteristics to consider: *water usage, color, texture, shade or sun tolerance, growth habits, pest resistance, and traffic wear.* Come in and ask one of our experts what is best for your yard!

Mistaken Identity

Thermal-imaging from a helicopter led policemen to break down a gate and enter an English garden in their hot pursuit of two fugitives. Instead of finding a couple of hiding thieves, the police discovered two active 3-foot compost bins full of steaming piles of rotting vegetables. The report concludes, "This was not just a case of egg on their faces, but potato peelings, banana skins and coffee grounds too."

Landscaping for Security

Statistically, burglary and theft are the two major crimes homeowners are most likely to experience. Most burglaries take place during the daytime, or on weekends, when no one is home. Here are some landscaping deterrents you can use to protect your valuables:

✓ **REDUCE HIDING PLACES** by keeping trees pruned high (no branches below 7 feet) and shrubs low (under 3 feet). Low plantings are especially important near entryways and driveways.

✓ **REMOVE ANY LIMBS** that could act as ladders over fences or provide easy climbing access to upper-stories.

✓ **PLANT PRICKLY SHRUBS OR THORNY PLANTS** under windows, but keep them trimmed below the windowsills to allow for an easy escape during a house fire.

✓ **TO CREATE PRIVATE AREAS:** pair the beauty of greenery and flowers with the painful discouragement of thorny vines or climbing roses—trained to cover walls or other barriers. Plant a hedge with spiny shrubs such as pyracantha or shrub roses.

✓ **KEEP YOUR GARAGE AND TOOL SHED LOCKED.** Why allow would-be intruders to use *your ladder* to break into upper-story windows?



Delicious Sautéed Squash Blossoms

Regulate your summer squash growth by harvesting extra blossoms and serving them as this tasty appetizer!

2 eggs

1/4 c parmesan cheese

1/8 c flour



1/8 c olive oil

3 TBS finely chopped parsley

15 squash blossoms

Remove stamens and pistals from the open flowers. Mix eggs, parmesan cheese, flour, oil, and parsley into a smooth batter. Dip the blossoms into the batter and then place them in a hot buttered frying pan. Brown each side and serve sprinkled with parmesan cheese.

Once cooked, these can be frozen, then rewarmed in the microwave or oven. You can also experiment by stuffing them with a variety of cheeses like cream cheese, chevre, or ricotta.

Ancient Beehives

Archaeologists recently unearthed in Israel an amazing 30 intact beehives dating to around 900 B.C., approximately the period that King Solomon reigned. The hives were stacked in neat rows, three tiers high, in a room that would have contained some 100 hives total and been able to *produce as much as half a ton of honey per year.*

This is an extraordinary find, because it is the first time that actual beehives have ever been discovered anywhere in the ancient Near East, and it indicates that early beekeeping was much more highly developed than what had been previously thought.

The Old Testament uses the term "honey" 55 times; 16 times as part of the image of Israel being "*the land of milk and honey.*" But many scholars had concluded the word "honey" usually referred to a type of "honey" produced from fruits such as dates and figs, partly because bee's honey is specifically mentioned only twice. This discovery confirms that nearly 3,000 years ago, real bee's honey was produced in much larger quantities than previously thought possible.

