

Gail's Gardens

Gail Fanning
Blue Hill Garden Design
bluehilldesign9@aol.com
707-829-2455



Spring is in the Air

Fragrance is all around: I love the smells of the spring garden! The subtle sweet fragrance of golden daffodils, and the rich honeyed smell of our beautiful blue California lilac (Ceanothus) are all around now for our enjoyment. Whenever I see spring flowers I am irresistibly drawn to plunge my nose in to savor their delightful perfume. I even enjoy the bright yellow acacia blooms (luckily I'm not allergic).

My favorite fragrant blooming shrub is wonderful Winter Daphne: it blooms so early in the spring and its sweet perfume hangs in the air around my front porch: a lovely start to every day in the garden. If you want to add a Daphne to your garden for its fragrance and glossy evergreen leaves, select a spot in partial shade with adequate water: this beauty is not drought tolerant! I particularly like the variety Daphne odora 'Aureomarginata' with golden edges on its glossy leaves, or you could try Daphne x burkwoodii 'Carole Mackie' which has white edging. All daphne can be a little difficult, and they definitely don't like their roots disturbed, but with a little luck they will give you years of enjoyment.



Another spring blooming favorite is the old-fashioned lilac: beautiful, tough and incredibly fragrant! Growing up in Illinois, we had a 15-foot tall hedge of lilacs that perfumed the entire yard every spring. Lilacs (Syringa

vulgaris) in California are a bit trickier because many of the older varieties need a good winter chill to bloom: some people report good success by piling ice on the roots a couple times during the winter. You can also try the newer Descanso lilac hybrids: bred in Southern California at Descanso Gardens, they are designed to bloom without winter chill. 'Lavender Lady' is a good purple selection; pink and white varieties are also available.

The ultimate spring-flowering tree for both perfume and visual appeal has to be Magnolia soulangiana, now coming into its magnificent bloom season: don't miss the two old beauties in front of the Sebastopol Post Office! This incredible tree, also known as tulip tree, or saucer magnolia, is well worth the investment, as it will provide you with many years of beauty and grace in all seasons: it makes a wonderful centerpiece for any garden with spring flowers and fragrance, summer dappled shade, subtle autumn color, and attractive shape and bark in the winter. Do your homework before you buy: there are so many varieties available with different sizes, colors, and fragrance.

Of course, there are many other more subtle scents in the spring garden: I love brushing against the rosemary along the path; and while cutting back frost damage, I was reminded again of the peppery-scented leaves of bacopa (Sutera cordata), one of my favorite ground covers. The Cleveland sage (Salvia clevelandii) is coming into its bloom season and the fresh new silvery leaves are wonderfully fragrant.

If you are considering adding fragrance to your garden, don't forget to consider Camellias (a few of which are fragrant), Sarcococca ruscifolia with its tiny white flowers, and Pittosporum tobira: all valuable evergreen shrubs with year-round appeal.

If you need help and advise with your garden, just give me a call at 829-2455. Consultations in your garden start at only \$50. Do you have a gardening question you would like to ask? Or a photo to share?

Send your questions and photos (jpg) to bluehilldesign9@aol.com.

You CAN afford help - Go to the Labor Center!

Hire
& Helping
Hand



OPEN EVERYDAY

Mon.- Sat: 6:30 AM - 2:00 PM
Sun: 7:00 - 11:00 AM

CALL TO SCHEDULE

829-1864

Men & Women Workers Available
Centro Laboral de Graton

2981 Bowen St. (Ross Rd)

JUST 1 BLOCK SOUTH
of DOWNTOWN GRATON

Graton Day Labor Center

www.GratonDayLabor.ORG

NO CHARGE for use of center
for workers or employers
We are a 501(c)3 public benefit corporation

ENJOY
CAFÉ W/ DIGNITY
organic/fair trade
WORKERS'
BREW
COFFEE

GARDENING

Mar 6, 27 ~ Plant Sale ~ Perennials & Unusuals, \$1-\$10! We accept plants, tools, & containers for reuse. Rain does not cancel. 9:00-2:00, Willowside School Nursery, 5285 Hall Rd at Willowside Rd, Santa Rosa ~ Misty, 707-887-8133 ~ oakgroveunionschools.org

Gardening Demonstrations ~ Free, fun, & informative! Presented by Gail Fanning of Blue Hill Garden Design. Saturdays, 10:30 am, Bassignani's Nursery, 1841 Gravenstein Hwy S, Sebastopol ~ 707-829-2455 ~ bluehilldesign.shorturl.com

Mar 6 ~ Super Succulents

Mar 20 ~ Flowers for Your Cutting Garden

Mar 27 ~ Early Spring Vegetables

Apr 3 ~ Mediterranean Natives

Sudden Oak Death Workshop ~ Presented by Sonoma County Master Gardeners & Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods. Free. Saturdays, 10:30-12:30 ~ 707-565-2608 ~ sonomamastergardeners.org

Mar 13 ~ Armstrong Woods State Park, Guerneville

Apr 10 ~ 4-H Center, 6445 Commerce Blvd, Rohnert Park

May 22 ~ Rincon Valley Library, 6959 Montecito Blvd

Jun 5 ~ Petaluma Public Library, 100 Fairgrounds Dr

Mar 20 ~ Organic Gardens Tour ~ Have water, sturdy shoes, hat, clothing layers. \$10 donation requested. 1:00-2:30 pm, Occidental Arts & Ecology Ctr, 15290 Coleman Valley Rd, Occidental ~ 707-874-1557 x201 ~ oaec.org

Rose Garden Open House ~ Free. 10:00-5:00. Demonstrations Saturdays at 10:00 & 2:00. Russian River Rose Co, 1685 Magnolia Dr, Healdsburg ~ 707-433-7455 ~ russian-river-rose.com

Apr 3, 4 ~ A Happy Rose Garden 'How to'

Apr 17, 18 ~ Fragrant Roses

Apr 24, 25 ~ Glorious Climbing Roses

ONGOING

2nd Tuesdays ~ Sonoma County Orchid Society ~ Learn, share and have fun! 6:45 pm, Veterans Memorial Building, 1351 Maple Ave, Santa Rosa ~ 707-795-0235 ~ sonomaorchids.com

**Garrett's
Country Gardens**

Full Service Nurseries
Garden Design
Animal Supplies

Garrett ACE Hardware

HEALDSBURG WINDSOR
707-433-5593 707-433-6590
1340 Healdsburg Ave. 10540 Old Redwood Hwy
Open 7 days a week

3rd Tuesdays ~ California Native Plant Society ~ Guest speakers & presentations. Monthly except July & Aug, 7:30 pm, Luther Burbank Art & Garden Center, 2050 Yulupa Ave, Santa Rosa ~ aprileowens@yahoo.com ~ cnpsmb.org

4th Tuesdays ~ Redwood Empire Bonsai Society ~ Monthly except July & Dec. 7:30 pm, Veterans Building West Room, 1351 Maple Ave, Santa Rosa ~ 707-942-4036 ~ rebsbonsai.org

Saturdays ~ Gardening Workshops ~ Sonoma County Master Gardeners cover topics such as: sudden oak death, succulents, & fruit tree pruning. 10:30-12:30 at Sonoma County Libraries. For schedule ~ 565-2608 ~ sonomamastergardeners.org

1st Saturdays ~ Green String Farm Tour ~ A different theme each week. \$5.00 by donation. Noon-1:30 pm, 3571 Old Adobe Rd, Petaluma ~ 707-778-7500 ~ greenstringfarm.com

Last Saturdays ~ West County Community Seed Bank ~ Share seed saving techniques. Monthly 10:00-1:00. Location varies. ~ Sara, 707-829-5234 ~ westcountyseedbank.blogspot.com

Threatened Garden ~ The Garden Conservancy seeks partners interested in participating in an effort to save *Western Hills Rare Plant Nursery & Garden* in Occidental. ~ gardenconservancy.org

**2010 Sonoma County Nurseries & Gardener's
Resource Guide INSIDE this edition and on the
web at www.sonomacountynurseries.com**