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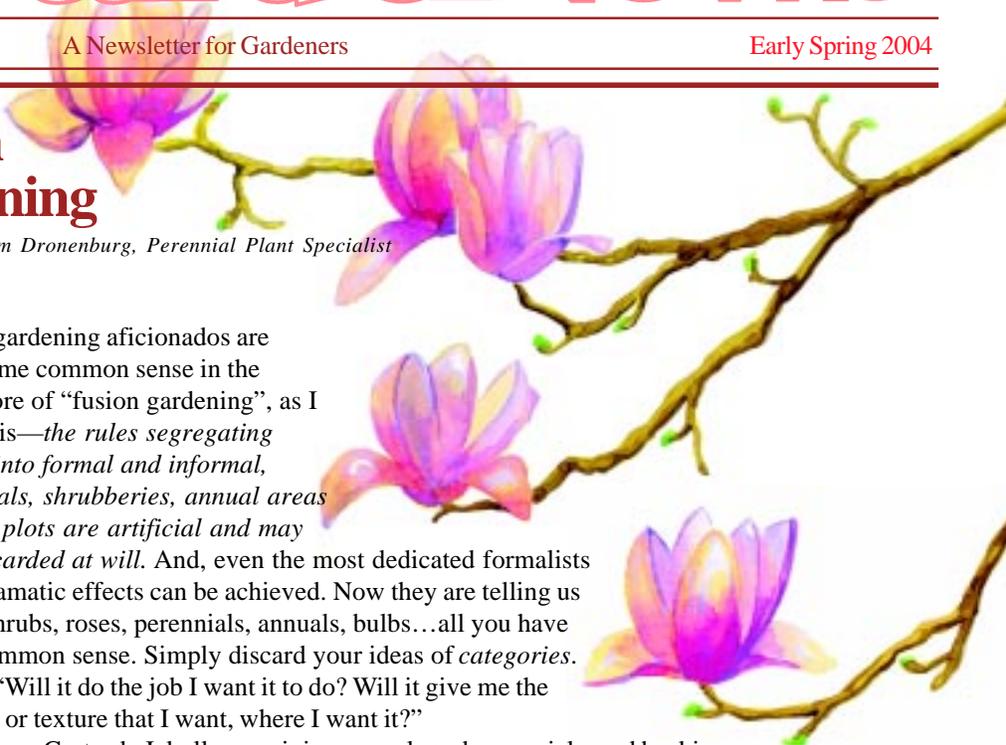
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Fusion Gardening

by Jim Dronenburg, Perennial Plant Specialist



Finally, gardening aficionados are talking some common sense in the garden. The core of “fusion gardening”, as I understand it, is—the *rules segregating garden areas into formal and informal, roses, perennials, shrubberies, annual areas and vegetable plots are artificial and may be kept or discarded at will.* And, even the most dedicated formalists must agree, dramatic effects can be achieved. Now they are telling us to mix trees, shrubs, roses, perennials, annuals, bulbs...all you have to do is use common sense. Simply discard your ideas of *categories*. Ask yourself, “Will it do the job I want it to do? Will it give me the color or height or texture that I want, where I want it?”

A century ago, Gertrude Jekyll was mixing annuals and perennials, and backing (and mixing) them with shrubs. She railed against the vast, formal bedding schemes of annuals and tender plants, but used them in spots and patches among the perennials she loved, saying, “A geranium was a geranium long before it was a bedding plant.” She also had the notion of planting, not in clusters, but in drifts, so it appeared that the plants had spread to their positions naturally.

Miss Jekyll, and Vita Sackville-West after her, espoused formal planning and layout of beds and walks, combined with informal planting schemes. The contents of the beds, for example, may trail out over the walks, or rear up into peaks and bays rather than being all of a size, or all of a kind. They believed that the overall effect was what mattered, and did not scruple to use whatever came to hand to achieve their effects. This idea fits well in the Metro area, where so many planting areas and their walks are defined by the rigid forms of the surrounding structures.

Start with recognizing what makes the framework around your area to plant. Put a framework in where needed. Decide what, if any, tall points/blocking masses you want. Shrubs or trees will give you definition and a background for your plantings—and are themselves additions to the show, grown for their flowers-or their foliage. *A shrub can be a foliage plant.* Many will flower in a time when flowers are needed, or give a good show in winter. Their bulk can define an area, screen out what you don’t want, or give the interest of a change in height to an otherwise long stretch of level planting. Now let’s think outside the box. Many perennials that die down to the ground in winter will nevertheless give the bulk of a shrub—like the perennial sunflowers, the Joe-Pye-weed, tall asters or grasses. *A perennial can do the job of a shrub* if a permanent, all-year screen is not needed.

continued on back cover



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The Periodical Cicada

— by Larry Hurley, Perennial Plant Specialist

It's year 17! The year 2004 is the year of emergence of brood X of the 17 year cicada, also known as the periodical cicada. Unlike Generation X, this X is the Roman numeral for 10. It is the emergence that covers the largest geographical area, including most of Maryland, Northern Virginia and Washington, DC. This will be a few weeks when it will be hard to ignore Mother Nature. Assuming that the drought and then the sodden soil hasn't caused some unforeseen problems, this is what will happen. At least, this is what happened in my yard 17 years ago (start the campfire or turn down the lights).

We heard a rustling sound in the grass one night. Thousands of immature cicadas were emerging from the ground, and crawling to anything they could climb—telephone poles and car tires were popular. They climbed a couple of feet, and then split open. The adult cicadas emerged. Like *Night of the Living Dead*, only smaller.

You know cicadas. They look like green and gray flying cigar butts and emit annoying buzzing noises in the hottest part of summer. The 17 year is a different species—much cooler in appearance. They look like black flying cigar butts with red eyes. There are so many that when they are flying in the trees looking to score, there are so many that the air has a sort of constant high-pitched hummming noise. Maybe it's partial hearing loss, but I don't recall hearing them buzz; however, all of the references I have swear that the males happily buzz away in the morning, trying to attract that "special someone". Cats and dogs love to eat them, which may be somewhat disgusting to their owners. They also have a tendency to do annoying things like fall down your shirt. Those wacky cicadas. If you don't like insects, this may be a bad time for you, but they don't bite or sting and are more stupid than evil. You basically just have to live with them—it's not the sort of thing you want to drown in Raid.

The adults do not cause feeding damage to plants. The females, however, lay their eggs in young tree branches. They insert their ovipositor (egg laying thingy) into the branch, leaving a series of inch long scars in the branch and up to 600 eggs. In 6 to 10 weeks the eggs hatch and ant-sized nymphs drop and burrow into the ground. They remain underground until they emerge to complete the 17 year cycle. Underground, they suck sap from tree roots but don't cause any damage. Because the branch that was used as a little bug nursery eventually breaks off and falls, the egg laying actually acts as a pruning for larger trees, and it is not anything to worry about. On young trees, such as fruit trees, maples, oaks, crabapples, and dogwoods, they can cause serious injury. The best bet is to cover the tree with a fine mesh bird netting, available at Behnke's. Remember to put it up *before* the cicadas start visiting the trees. This whole event only lasts a few weeks, and you should notice them in May and June, before their more familiar cousins appear in the hotter part of summer. □

New Facility Planned for 2005

The staff at Behnke Nurseries is busily planning for a relocation of the Largo, Maryland nursery and greenhouses to a location yet to be determined. "Behnke Nurseries has produced quality plants in Largo, MD for almost 25 years. We will continue to provide to Maryland, Washington and Virginia area gardeners the widest selection and best quality of plants and garden accessories available. Our nurseries in Beltsville, MD and Potomac, MD will continue to serve gardeners", said John Peter Thompson, CEO. Behnke Nurseries is looking to relocate in the local region and is planning improvements in operations that will allow it to better serve its customers. "For our customers who visit our Largo store, we are planning a to be fully stocked this spring," said Thompson. "We grow many of the plants we sell. We will have a smooth transition from our old greenhouses to the new."



Meet: Mike Behnke

Mike Behnke, grandson of founders Albert and Rose Behnke, was born and raised in southern California. When he learned from his father, William Behnke, that the second generation of the Behnke family was retiring, and the third generation was taking the helm, Mike decided to try his hand at nursery work.

Mike spent time at all three stores working a variety of jobs until finally landing in Potomac as Store Manager. He describes his job at Potomac as “wherever, whenever. Sometimes, I’m behind a computer, or watering, filling propane tanks, building a roof, digging a hole or looking for some leak. I’ll sometimes try to set up a new policy or procedure to make life easier for the customers and the employees.”

In his spare time, Mike enjoys eating, reading, snowboarding, working out and meeting people. His greatest love is international travel. He’s been to Mexico, France, Italy, Spain, Germany, the Netherlands, Greece, Austria and Switzerland. He plans to travel through Eastern Europe this summer. One of his fondest memories is of running with the bulls in Spain in 1999. He hopes to run again this year.

Mike holds a degree from CSUSB in Communication with an emphasis in mass media. He has worked in the film industry on projects which include **The Nutty Professor** and **Heat**. He plans to finish a degree in Psychology in the near future.

John Peter Thompson is Honored by PPA

The Perennial Plant Association named John Peter Thompson national **Perennial Retailer of the Year** at its annual meeting in Sacramento in 2003. John is C.E.O. and Chairman of the Board of Behnke Nurseries, and the grandson of founders Albert and Rose Behnke. John accepted on behalf of Behnke Nurseries, which took an early leadership role in promoting perennials in our area. Perennials really took off in the 1980’s under department manager Lynn Cohen, and we continue to provide both the new and the “tried and true” perennials to our customers.

Buyer Larry Hurley, and department managers Randy Best (Beltsville), Patricia Manke (Potomac) and Betty Stevens (Largo) provide nearly 2000 cultivars to our customers over the course of the year. Of course, we grow many of the perennials we sell: Terri Poindexter oversees our perennial production where we focus on peonies, hostas, daylilies, native plants, and the newest introductions from vendors such as Terra Nova.

John Peter Thompson has taken a leadership role in the horticulture industry to promote innovative programs to encourage the use of native and beneficial plants under our Baysafe program, and to discourage the planting of potentially invasive plants.



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Palms to Pamper and

These Beautiful Indoor Plants are Worth a



Potted palms bring us a touch of the tropics and lend us a moment to daydream about travels to warm and exotic places. With their architectural foliage, glossy leaves and attractive textured trunks, palms make wonderful specimen plants. Mother Nature has not provided us with “houseplants.” Genetically speaking, plants were not designed to live indoors, but through trial and error, we have found that many survive indoors rather easily.

Keeping indoor palms healthy must involve an effort to replicate the environment that they would prefer in their native habitat. With palms, this is often high humidity, warm temperatures, and good air circulation. During their most active growth period in spring and summer, we must debate whether or not to turn on the air conditioner, thus lowering the temperature and humidity to our comfort level and not the palm’s. In addition, not all palms are created equal. Some thrive only in a brightly lit sunny location, while others tolerate the lower light levels that are more typical of our homes. Since palms are rather slow-growing and generally more expensive than other houseplants, consider your location in the home carefully.

Even the so-called “shade-tolerant” palms need fairly bright indirect light most of the day. Without adequate light your palm will begin to lose it’s lower fronds and look like a stick, or series of sticks, with a few leaves on top. If this sounds familiar, consider what I mean by bright indirect light. We measure light in footcandles. In the evening, inside your home, with a TV and a table lamp on you might have 25 footcandles. The light in an office or study, where it is easy to read a book, is usually about 125 footcandles. Sunlight entering a south window often has levels of 500-800 footcandles. A typical shaded greenhouse, where indoor plants are grown, has about 2000 footcandles. Outside, on a bright and sunny summer day, when the

sun is directly overhead it is around 10,000 footcandles. Needless to say, you will seldom have as much light inside your home or office as in the nursery where the plants were grown. Bright indirect light (around 500 footcandles) is as much light as you can find indoors without being in the sun. Remember that light travels in straight lines. To get bright light, the plant must be in the window, not next to it. Also, light intensity drops rapidly as the light crosses the room, so the wall across from the window is much darker than the window itself.

Though their light requirements may differ, most palms have similar needs when it comes to water and fertilizer. Keep palms uniformly moist, but not wet. In spring and summer, or when temperatures are warm and days are longer, water them as soon as their soil feels dry a little below the surface. If you are running the air conditioner or it is winter, allow the soil to get slightly drier, almost one-third or half way down from the top of the soil and then water thoroughly. It is important that the potting soil drains well (use Schultz potting mixes), and containers you use have functioning drainage holes. Palms must never be allowed to “stand in water.”

Fertilize at half strength (Jack’s Classic 20-20-20) from early spring through late summer and never when the soil is too dry. A predictable problem of all houseplants, including palms, is the gradual build-up of salts within the soil caused when the water evaporates, leaving behind calcium and sodium, similar to the inside of your teapot. This, in addition to a build-up of fertilizer salts, will result in those dreaded brown tips and edges, especially if you allow the soil to get too dry between waterings. The treatment for this malady is to take the plant outside (or to the bathtub), twice a year, and saturate the soil about a dozen times, leaching out all the salts. Keep palm fronds clean by taking your plant to the shower every two months and washing off the leaves. Spider mites are attracted to dusty foliage and can balloon into a serious problem, particularly in winter, when relative

humidity is low indoors. Place your palms on extra large saucers, filled with damp gravel, to provide extra humidity.

So which palm is best for you? Behnke’s has five of my favorites beginning with the Parlor Palm also known as the Neanthe Bella Palm, *Chamaedorea elegans*. This slow-growing, dwarf palm has more shade tolerance than any other. A shrubby plant with many stems or canes, you’ll find it available in sizes ranging from only eight to ten inches tall, perfect for a desk or coffee table (in your parlor), to three feet in height. Two close relatives, the Bamboo Palm, *Chamaedorea erumpens*, and the Reed Palm, *Chamaedorea seifrizii*, share the ability to survive in relatively low light. However, they can grow to seven feet, especially in a brighter location. You should expect to lose some of the interior foliage as your palm begins it’s acclimation to your indoor setting, exposing stems that resemble bamboo and reed grass. The Kentia Palm, *Howea fosteriana*, is a tall, stately, slender plant with gracefully arching large fronds. It is a single-trunked species, but is often planted as three or four plants to give the appearance of being a clumping palm. This palm does best in “medium” rather than “low” light locations and will tolerate the soil drying out a bit. Lady Palm, *Rhapis excelsa*, adds a distinctively “oriental” look to interior landscapes. Like the Kentia palm, it is slow-growing and suitable for medium light locations. You will find it priced on the high end of the scale, like the Kentia, due to the long time it takes to grow to a marketable size. Lady palms are shaped like shrubs rather than trees, with many thin stems growing from the soil. Their unusual dark green foliage consists of several leaflets on each frond, joined so as to remind you of fingers on a hand. A lady’s hand, no doubt.

Let us help your qualms about palms on your next visit to Behnke’s.



Finicky Ficus

Little Extra Effort

Just about everyone that has ever purchased a *Ficus benjamina* tree (commonly known as the weeping fig), has had to drag out the vacuum, broom, or even a rake to clean up those leaves that have dropped. All too often the concerned plant owner tries to water more, or water less, repot it, feed it, move it into more light, or move it into less light, and simply put, the plant just gets confused and so do we.

I have taken many of your phone calls asking why this happens, and generally speaking you will hear me say: "It's adjusting to it's new environment. It's acclimating". Acclimating is normally a matter of going from high light to lower light. Just as we have certain expectations when we adopt an indoor plant, plants also have certain expectations of us. Understanding their native habitats can help us to satisfy those expectations.

The Ficus family is quite diverse with over 800 species and 2,000 varieties. They can be found growing in full sun or the heavily shaded dense forest. Contrary to what you may have heard, ficus is a very versatile plant as far as light goes. In the full sun, they will have a thick canopy of leaves; but, in the dense forest, they will grow very open with fewer leaves and thin weeping branches. If one could measure the actual thickness of the individual leaves, you would find the leaves to also be thicker when grown in the sun and thinner when grown in the shade. This explains some of the leaf loss when your ficus goes from higher light levels (typically our greenhouse) to a lower light level (your home). They are adapting (acclimating), dropping inefficient leaves and producing more efficient leaves for capturing available sunlight.

Just as sure as birds migrate south for the winter season, the *Ficus benjamina* comes from an area of the world that has always had a very distinct wet and dry season. When preparing for the dry

season (like that time when you thought *someone else* was watering your ficus), they shed their leaves. This reduces the amount of leaves needed to survive, since a decrease in water will not support all of them. When the rains return (the first time you watered after you noticed all the leaves on the floor), new growth will emerge and the canopy will return. As with light changes, their survival mechanism is leaf drop. Ficus do not like changes, they are truly creatures of habit. What they want, as much as anything else, is a consistent environment.

Once you have decided where you are going to place your ficus (the more light the better), try to keep it in the same location. Although your indoor environment changes with the seasons, develop a watering schedule. The soil should be kept moist but not soggy and should not dry out between waterings. One of the first keys to having success with your plants indoors is maintaining a good root system. Do not make the mistake of repotting your new plant for at least several months. This would disturb the root system and change the amount of moisture around the roots. *Do* clean the leaves to remove dust on a regular basis. You should take your ficus to the shower about every two months, or if you prefer to shower alone a damp cloth will do. When grown indoors, ficus have almost no need to be fertilized; however, any well balanced fertilizer (Jack's Classic 20-20-20) will maintain growth during spring and summer. Ficus enjoy warm conditions between 68-85 during the day. As with most tropicals, they will flourish in almost any well drained potting soil (Schultz potting mixes).

Keep in mind that your ficus tree has been shipped from our Florida growers to our greenhouses and then to your home. The plant is experiencing both light changes and moisture changes. Moisture-

stressed ficus tend to drop yellow leaves, while ficus exposed to low-light stress tend to drop green leaves.

Great news! Today, thanks to a rigorous trial process, several new varieties have emerged that are highly resistant to leaf drop. Five of my favorites can be found at Behnke's in many forms which include standard trees, braided trunks, bushes and bonsai. *Ficus* 'Monique' is an upright benjamina type with a bushy growth pattern. It's leaves are shiny, bright green and have ruffled edges. To date, 'Monique' is the most popular of these new ficus varieties. *Ficus* 'Indigo' has an open, weepy appearance. It's leaves emerge deep green and darken with maturity to almost blue-black with a high-gloss. As the outer leaves darken, a slight variegation appears in the leaf's midrib. *Ficus* 'Midnight' is a sister plant of 'Indigo' with extremely dark, bluish to black, glossy leaves. It's growth pattern is upright and it also displays a compact, bushy habit. *Ficus* 'Amstel King' has long, banana shaped leaves. New growth tips are a very pronounced pink to red that contrast beautifully against the broad, shiny leaves. And finally there is *Ficus* 'Wiandii'. This variety has smaller leaves with branches that zig and zag, often turning at right angles. The free-form growth pattern makes this one ideal for bonsai.

On your next visit to Behnke's, ask about our "Ficus of the Future" and give them a try.

By Mike Baker, Manager, Houseplant Department



Fresh Herbs in the Kitchen

— by Roger Zinn, Behnke Staff and Professional Chef

This is the first installment in a two part series on how to harvest, store and better utilize the herbs we grow. In this article I will focus on herbs that are best used fresh from the garden to your table. I can think of no other ingredient that can add as much life to the foods we eat.

The best time to harvest herbs is in the late morning, after the dew has dried. Use sharp scissors to cut the stalk down to the first pair of leaves, or close to ground level. Also, remove stems that are starting to flower first. This will keep your plants compact and increases your harvest. Wash the leaves in cool water, and gently towel dry. The leaves can then be stored in plastic bags in the crisper drawer of your refrigerator for several days.

Basil is a warm season annual, and should not be set outside until the soil has warmed. I plant mine out the same time as tomatoes. Pesto is a wonderful way to use basil and it freezes well for up to six months. Roast walnuts or pine nuts first and always use real Italian Parmesan or Romano cheese. Use whole basil leaves in salads, use them to replace the lettuce on your BLT, or add a sprig to your bloody Mary. Make large batches of your favorite tomato sauce and freeze. Always add basil to the sauce while it is still boiling, and then cool down as quickly as possible for the best flavor.



Cilantro is an annual herb that needs to be planted throughout the growing season to ensure a good crop. Do not let cilantro go to flower as the flavor is lost at that point. Cilantro is wonderful with Latin and Asian foods—it adds a piquant top note to

sweet-hot-sour-salty things. It is wonderful added to chicken noodle soup, just as you serve it. You can make a quick blender salsa by combining white onion, jalapenos, cilantro, salt and just enough water to blend.



Mint is a vigorous perennial so I like to grow it in pots. Make sure to add plenty of compost since mint depletes the soil. Mint makes a wonderfully soothing tea by steeping the leaves in freshly boiled water for 5-10 minutes. Try adding a few sprigs to lemonade, fruit smoothies, melon, peas, grilled meats, tomato dishes, or cucumber soup. Mint is underutilized in today's kitchens so experiment and be rewarded.

Chives are a perennial herb that should be divided when the center of the clump looks tired. Snip the leaves off close to ground level and remember that the flowers are edible as well. I love chives—they can be added to any savory dish just at the end for a garden fresh finish. The lovely flower heads are a delicious garnish or pick the tiny individual flowers and sprinkle liberally onto food.

Tarragon is a perennial herb. I recommend the flavor of French tarragon over the Russian. Tarragon dislikes wet soil. Be careful not to let weeds invade your plants and divide them every 2-3 years. Tarragon adds a distinctive flavor to chicken, fish, eggs and pickles. Try adding to tartar sauce or mustard. A wonderful way to use this herb year round is to make tarragon vinegar by adding 3 oz. of leaves to 1 qt. of good quality cider vinegar, and let stand for 2 weeks. It is also wonderful with new potatoes.

Parsley is a biennial herb. Its flowering stems should be removed in the second year to increase the harvest. Parsley has flavorful stems that should be used in making stocks so don't discard them. Try adding whole leaves to green salads, or toss them into pasta and vegetable dishes.



I enjoy a parsley sauce made in a blender by combing roughly chopped parsley, horseradish, garlic, olive oil, and salt. Try on anything from poached salmon to sandwiches. □

Visit The Herb Society of America
www.herbsociety.org for more information.

Gardening Calendar Tips

To garden is to believe in promises — that seeds will sprout and grow, that strawberry plants will bear fruit and that the seasons will arrive in order and on time.

But faith alone is no guarantee of success. Of course nature doesn't require our intervention, but a garden does. To be a gardener is to be willing to labor to direct the course of natural events to bring about a pleasing result.

March

Remove leaves and other debris from under fruit trees to help prevent disease.

Sow warm season vegetables, such as tomatoes and peppers, indoors.

Sow cool season crops, such as broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower and Brussels sprouts directly into the ground in late March.

Plant dormant shrubs, trees and perennials now. Plant grapevines, fruit trees, berry bushes, rhubarb and asparagus.

Divide summer blooming perennials, such as iris, daylilies and echinacea, if need be.

Apply pre-emergent weed preventer on lawns and in flower beds. Mid March is a good time to re-seed your lawn. Pick up our Lawn Care handout for complete instructions.

Prune winter damaged hedges and roses.

Cut back ornamental grasses.

Begin to prepare annual and vegetable garden beds. It's a good idea to test the soil and make adjustments to the pH if necessary.

April

Fertilize azaleas after they finish blooming. Prune only when necessary to shape plants and remove dead branches.

Divide fall-blooming perennials.

Fertilize bulbs. Remove spent flowers from early bloomers, but leave the foliage! Allow the leaves to ripen (turn yellow) before removal. This will allow the bulbs to store nourishment and ensure a good bloom next year.

Apply a second application of pre-emergent weed preventer on lawns and in garden beds in the latter half of this month. Follow label instructions carefully whenever applying chemicals and fertilizer.

Begin working your vegetable garden soil in earnest. Turn the soil frequently and add cow manure, peat moss, lime, compost and other organic amendments in abundance.

Try not to walk on prepared beds. Use stepping stones or lay a board down temporarily.

Sow a first crop of dill seeds late this month. Continue to sow seeds every few weeks to ensure a constant supply of fresh dill.

May

Be on the lookout for aphids, which appear this month. They especially love tender new growth on roses.

The last frost date in our area is April 20 for city gardens, May 10 for most suburbs, and May 15 for rural areas.

Check for borers on dogwood trees. Look for small pin holes around the base of the trunk and crooks of branches. Rhododendrons, lilacs and Japanese red maple trees are susceptible, too. Check with our Garden Shop for treatment or other methods of prevention.

Houseplants can be moved outdoors in May. Most houseplants will be quite happy outdoors in full shade. Sun loving plants should start out in full shade and gradually be moved into sunnier areas. The leaves may scorch if they are exposed to unexpected levels of sunlight.

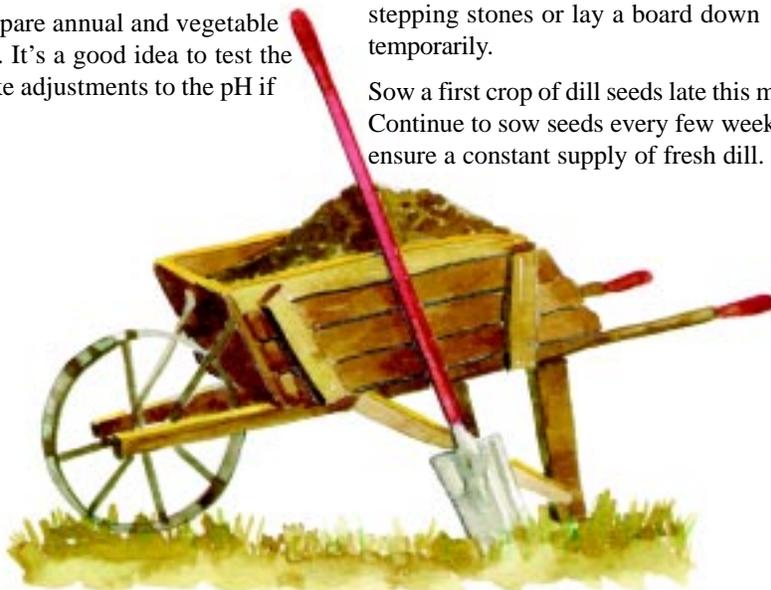
Divide early blooming bulbs, such as daffodils, if they are crowded.

Pull weeds now, while they are small and the weather is pleasant, and before they go to seed and multiply.

Check out the new space-saving varieties of cantaloupes and melons. These yield delicious fruit in tight spaces.

It's time to say goodbye to pansies which were planted last fall. Although they can brave the winter blasts, they will not thrive in our hot and humid summers. Pull them up and replace them with summer loving annuals.

Helleborus seedlings can be found growing beneath mature plants. Transplant these to a shady spot to allow them to mature.



Fusion Gardening, from Page 1

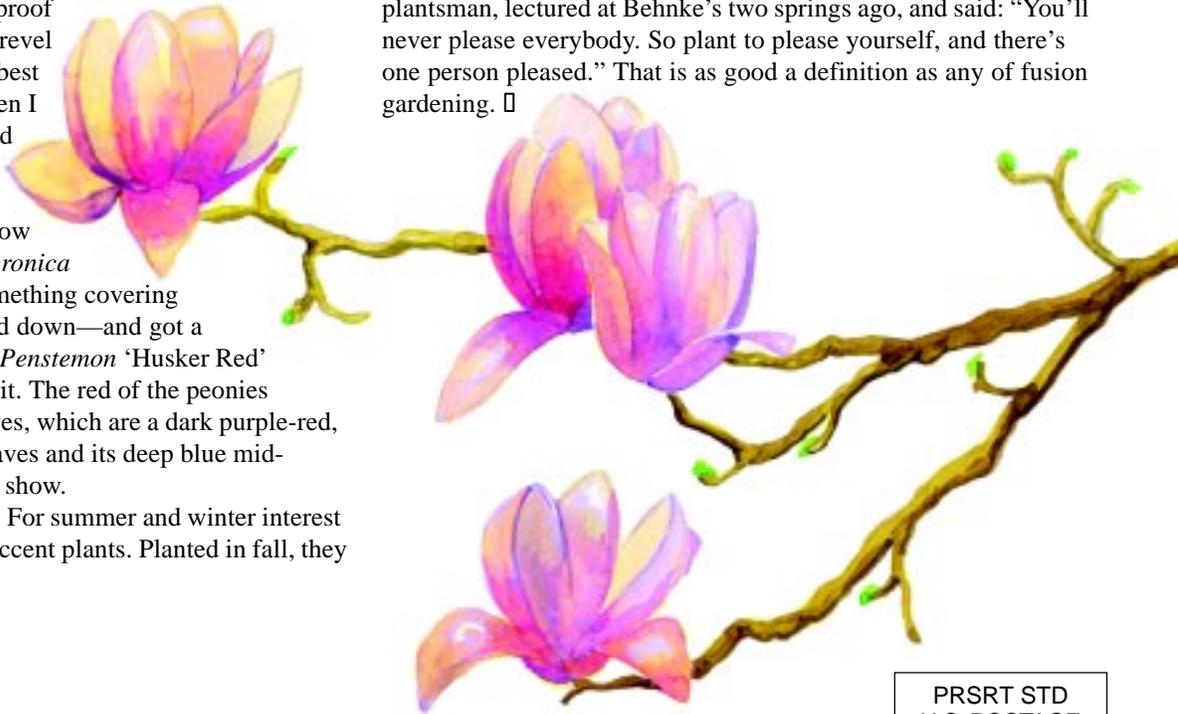
To add interest, consider breaking up the height gradations of a large border with something taller than other things around it. You need not stick to an invisible plane of height from front to back all along the border's length; occasional, especially repeating, variation brings interest.

There are roses out there that can do any job you want them to. Use them for a backdrop; for winter interest; for ground covers; send them up a tree; you do not need to chop the living daylight out of them any more, nor keep them to themselves.

Consider NOT mulching your beds, or parts of them. (Granted, this is more labor intensive, at least at first.) Instead, plant in layers as Vita Sackville-West did. Rather than bare ground, think about things like *Veronica* 'Waterperry', or herbs like pennyroyal, the creeping thymes, or Corsican mint; ajugas; the tiny mondo grasses. Lily-of-the valley, or even Solomon's-seal in its various types, will make a relatively weed-proof cover under taller shrubs, and will revel in the shade provided. One of my best (accidental) combos happened when I had a bed of old roses, interspersed with peonies and other perennials, and bordered with daffodils and *Lycoris*. I under-planted the front row of roses with the two-inch-high *Veronica* 'Waterperry' because I wanted something covering the ground for when the bulbs died down—and got a pleasant surprise when my nearby *Penstemon* 'Husker Red' decided to seed into the middle of it. The red of the peonies coming up and the penstemon leaves, which are a dark purple-red, against the dark green veronica leaves and its deep blue mid-Spring flowers, were a magnificent show.

Try vegetables as ornamentals. For summer and winter interest both, I use chard 'City Lights' as accent plants. Planted in fall, they

will keep their color FAR better than ornamental cabbages—and can be kept to size by occasional removal of the outer leaves. In summer, bush squash actually make a good sculptural plant; put something small around them instead of mulch and the stems are wonderfully structural. Cucumbers or beans can go up arbors and trellises. Herbs, thymes, oreganos and the like, make wonderful borders, especially as covers over plantings of bulbs. Let them, and things like alchemilla (lady's-mantle) or some of the sprawling summer annuals, trail over the sides of your beds and out into your walks. This will give a pleasant breaking and softening of line. Garden ornament? Don't ask *me*. I firmly believe that any ornament takes up space that would be better used to cram in more plants. The ones that I do have are inherited, and kept for their memories of the people and places they came from. But here, in all other respects, the bottom line is what YOU want. David Culp, the noted plantsman, lectured at Behnke's two springs ago, and said: "You'll never please everybody. So plant to please yourself, and there's one person pleased." That is as good a definition as any of fusion gardening. □



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