

Sacramento Garden Notes

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A New Nursery – I went a visited The Plant Foundry today (2/21). This new nursery is at 3500 Broadway in Oak Park.

Since the owner is a long term attendee of the Plant Sales, with a longtime dream of owning a nursery, I was curious how she had converted her longtime dream into reality.

They had a nice selection of Blooms Perennials, bare root trees and shrubs, veggie starters, Annie's Annuals Plants and even some of the harder to find items I've been looking around for like variegated Clivia.

They also had a good selection of supplies and tools.

All in all, a nice small nursery with some hard to find unusual items. Check it out when your around town.

You can email them at info@plantfoundry.com and their website is at www.plantfoundry.com

The Sheppard Garden & Arts Center in McKinley Park has its annual Spring Sale Sat & Sun March 19th & 20th.

All the clubs will be there selling various plants and garden related items. The

Perennial Plant Club always has a good selection of Plants in their area at the back of the main patio.

I'll be working at the Begonia Society booth with a selection of Begonias and other plants grown by the club members. Stop and say hello if I'm there at the same time you are!

Other clubs/vendors will have other plants. Hours for the sale will be 10am to 4 pm both days.



Above: The dark blue Ipheion above is Henry Fiedler. Ipheions are small bulbs from South America (Chile, Argentina, and Uruguay) that send up foliage in the fall, are green all winter and start blooming in early spring. The light blue species form has naturalized in some lawns in the older sections of Downtown and Curtis Park. It makes a nice winter spot of green and early color, even in a dry garden as it needs no summer water. It also comes in other color forms of white, purple and pink as well as the original light blue. Bulbs are available from Brent & Becky's Bulbs. I have a couple of pots that came up from last year around but didn't plant any new ones for sale.

The picture below (next page top) is the rarely seen yellow hybrid form of Chasmanthe. The orange form is in full bloom now in the city strip I maintain and around town. I have ONE pot (2 gal) of yellow with about 5 bulbs in it if someone wants it. (\$12). That is about what the dormant bulbs would cost retail. Note that while

Chasmanthe grows well in Sacramento, it is not good for hard frost/freeze areas. It is a South African bulb and can sit bone dry in summer but doesn't require being dry like some of the South African and CA native bulbs do.



Speaking of South African (SA) and native Californian (CA) bulbs, which work wonderfully in a dry garden to fill in empty spots with winter foliage and spring flowers, fill grow through gravel used as a much (or any mulch) and even reseed into the mulch (lol). Others that you can use include Freesia(SA), Treitelia (CA), Oxalis (both), Ixia (SA), species gladiolas, Nerines and some of the Orninogalums, to name a few. Annie's Annuals has other South African bulbs also, and since many, like some CA native bulbs require a dry summer to keep from rotting, make great fillers in a dry, drip irrigation garden where there are spots without emitters, they grow during the rainy

season (fall through spring) and are dry during the summer.

Garden Notes:

Well, with high pressure back in place causing February to be unusually dry and warm BUT following the pattern of the last few years one has to wonder if our new norm is early season rain followed by a high setting up and giving us warmer, drier weather for the latter part of the winter as this is the 5th year we have had this pattern. Although last year the high set up in January rather than February.

Looking at the last few years, while the record low for today (Feb 28th, my 63rd Birthday) is 30 degrees, I really don't expect anything but a possible light frost from here on, so I've taken off all the frost cloth to work on the plants (though I'm still not packing it away till mid month- Just In Case. March 1st addition – looks like we are in for several days of showers this coming weekend, but no frost in the 7 day forecast.

The Heuchera and Tiarella are budding, Cane Begonias that dropped all their leaves are budding out, the Ground Orchids (Bletilla) are up and showing buds, Lilies are coming up, Daffodils and Crocus are blooming, Hardy Gladiolas are budding, the Clematis I cut to the ground is almost 3 foot tall and a lot of the spring blooming Begonias are sending up flowers spikes. All in all it looks like spring is well underway.

I even have some Trillium showing shoots, even after being dug up twice by the &*(^ squirrels. I swear! Next winter bird netting over all the wintering pots!!

If you want to divide any of your perennials, now while they still small and the weather is cool is the best time.

Items that are not showing growth yet (Hardy Hibiscus, Dahlias, later growing lilies, Rhodohypoxis and a few other later emerging things) shouldn't be worried about and if your digging to divide, do with care not to cut through the roots too badly.

It is time for the first feeding, especially for potted plants and houseplants that haven't been feed all winter. With new growth comes the need of nutrients. Speaking of nutrients, wood ash contains many nutrients, so sprinkling wood ash around the garden or on the compost pile adds nutrients. They are especially good sprinkled around root crops and bulbs, or spread before you rototill the vegetable garden.

If you identified things that need moved last season, get it done now before they make too much growth.



Above on Feb 24th, This Kniphofia (Red Hot Polka) is one of the large late winter bloomers and makes a nice show off spot of color against the white city sound wall on Truxel, even if some complain about my having the contract for the stretch between the two entries to Vallarta Circle. They complain it is “different” from the rest of the city plantings.

BTW, Red Hot Polka is a good hummingbird plant, is drought resistant and

basically pest free. The only “problem” is after blooming, as new leaves start growing, the old start to die off, looking a bit messy. But many plants are like that. If one stuck only to plants always looking the same and never having any down time, the garden would be pretty monotonous and boring. That however sums up most non-gardeners gardens and commercial landscaping.



Above, the South African Lachenalia – this is one that needs to be dry when summer dormant, puts up foliage in the fall and blooms in late Feb/March. Once dormant in late spring, the pots can be stored dry or the bulbs removed and stored until August, then repeated or watered for the cycle to begin again. These are frost tender to all but very light frosts.

I have a couple of pots of the purple form available if anyone would like them.

Well, it is March 1st so guess I'll wrap this up and get it out. Those of you who sent in donations will shortly get a list of what is available now for pick up or shipping.

Have a good month! Bob