

Planting Plans for Central Valley Gardens

Ellen Zagory, Director of Horticulture

One of the most complex processes we undertake as garden creators is choosing plants to combine in mixed plantings.

When selecting plants, we must consider a variety of characteristics, both of the plant and of the site. We may select plants based on color, season of interest, the plant's ability to tolerate too much or too little water, or its preference for sun or shade. In this issue we provide some examples of plants that can be successfully used in combination. We have designed four sample 5' x 10' planting beds, for four different garden situations.

We will assume that the reader has an "average" soil—not too rocky or sandy, nor with impenetrable hardpan or clay. Before attempting to implement any of these recommendations, study your site and learn which areas are sunny and which are shady. Keep areas without irrigation separate.

The most typical garden condition for many new gardeners, especially those with new homes, is full sun. Two of our planting plans feature plants that will grow in, and even prefer, full sun conditions in the Central Valley. When gardening in the Valley during our long, hot summers, careful monitoring of the plants for signs of wilting is crucial, especially

when they are newly planted. Watering infrequently for long periods will encourage the plant roots to go deeper into the soil in pursuit of moisture. These deeper roots help buffer the plant from the fluctuations of dryness at the top of the soil. Using mulch to protect the roots from the heat of the sun is also helpful.



Achillea 'Coronation Gold'
 Photo by Saxon Holt

IN THIS ISSUE

| | |
|----------------------------|----|
| Bay Area Garden Network... | 4 |
| Landscape internship | 4 |
| New volunteers..... | 5 |
| 90th birthdays..... | 6 |
| Mia Ingolia | 7 |
| Calendar | 7 |
| Memberships & gifts | 8 |
| Director's letter | 10 |

Find the plants featured in this article at

**Friends of the UC Davis Arboretum
 Spring Plant Sales**

**April 8, April 29, May 20
 9:00 am-1:00 pm**

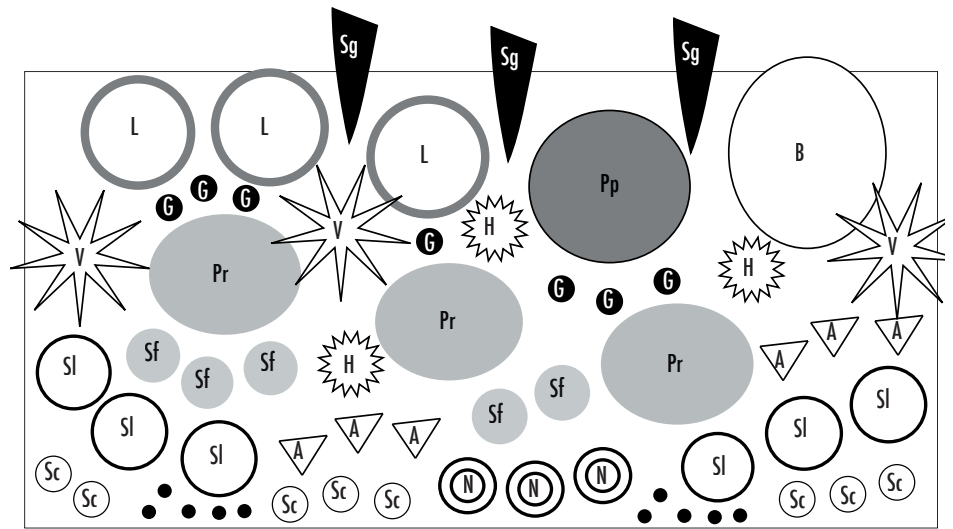
Arboretum Nursery at Orchard Park

**10% member discount!
 Join at the door!**

**Info: 530-752-4880
arboretum.ucdavis.edu**

PURPLE & GOLD GARDEN

This plan for a sunny garden bed combines plants that will hold their foliage all year with true herbaceous perennials that retreat to a smaller mound in the winter. Plants marked * are evergreen and will help maintain garden structure in winter. Plants marked + need to be deadheaded (dried flower heads cut off) after bloom. In this planting the *Achillea*, *Nepeta*, *Salvia* and *Stipa* will all be clipped at the end of the warm season and rest over the winter. Come March they will reinitiate growth from low mounds or roots and begin again to put on a show. The *Helichrysum*, *Lavender*, and *Phlomis purpurea* will keep their gray, furry foliage and structure through the winter and need only clipping to shape, although they do benefit from early spring “hedging,” which initiates new growth from buds low on the stem. The *Gladiolus* is a deliciously fragrant spring-blooming bulb with long, slender, folded leaves and creamy flowers. The *Sternbergia* along the edge of the planting will surprise you in fall with its beautiful, golden crocus-like blooms.

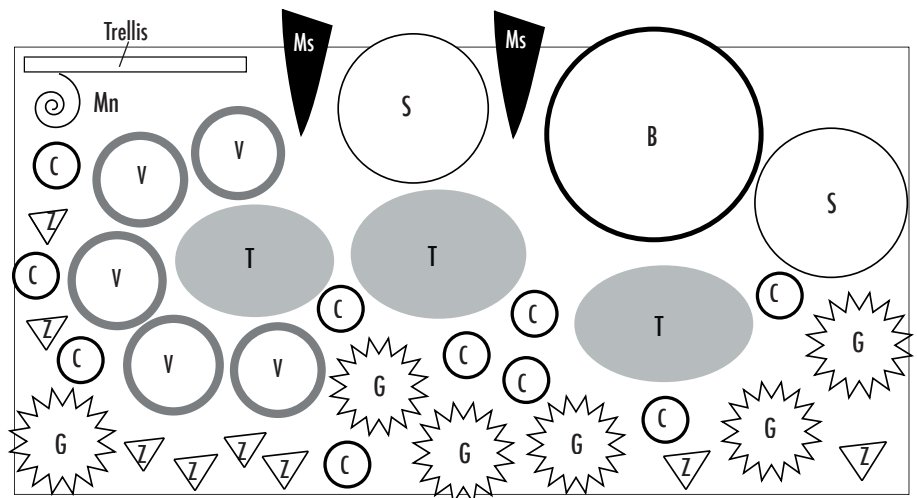


Purple & Gold Garden for sun and regular irrigation (every 7-10 days)

| | Scientific name | Common name | Size | Foliage/Flower | Season |
|----|--|-------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|--------------|
| A | <i>Achillea</i> 'Coronation Gold'+ | coronation gold yarrow | 2-3' | green/yellow | spr/sum |
| B | <i>Buddleja davidii</i> 'Alamo Purple' | purple butterfly bush | 3-4' | green/purple | spr/sum |
| G | <i>Gladiolus tristis</i> | night perfume gladiolus | 2' | green/cream | spring |
| H | <i>Helichrysum italicum</i> * | curry plant | 1' | silvery white | all season |
| L | <i>Lavandula</i> × <i>intermedia</i> 'Fred Boutin'+* | Fred Boutin lavender | 2-3' | silver/violet-blue | spr/sum |
| N | <i>Nepeta racemosa</i> 'Walkers Low'+ | Walker's catmint | 2' | gray/violet-blue | spring |
| Pp | <i>Phlomis purpurea</i> * | pink Jerusalem sage | 3-4' | gray/lavender | spr/sum |
| Pr | <i>Phlomis russeliana</i> +* | creeping phlomis | 1' x 2' fl. to 3' | soft green/yellow | spr/sum |
| Sf | <i>Salvia forsskaolii</i> +* | indigo woodland sage | 2' x 3' | green/violet-blue | spring |
| SI | <i>Salvia lavandulifolia</i> * | Spanish sage | 1' x 3' | gray/pale lavender | spring |
| Sc | <i>Scabiosa columbaria</i> 'Nana'+* | dwarf pincushion | 6" x 1' | green/lavender | spring |
| ● | <i>Sternbergia lutea</i> (bulb) | sternbergia | 6" | green/yellow | fall |
| Sg | <i>Stipa gigantea</i> +* | giant stipa | 5-6' | green/golden | spr/sum/fall |
| V | <i>Verbascum bombyciferum</i> 'Polarsommer'+* | arctic summer mullein | 1' x 3' fl. to 4' | white/yellow | spring |

WHITE GARDEN

Using only white-flowering plants and variegated foliage creates beauty and interest. White-flowering plants appear cool and fresh even during hot Valley summers. As an added bonus, white flowers reflect light and glow in the moonlight and are often especially fragrant in the evening, when people in hot climates come outside to enjoy their gardens. These are a few of the plants that have grown well in the Carolee Shields White Flower Garden in the Arboretum.



White Garden for sun and regular irrigation

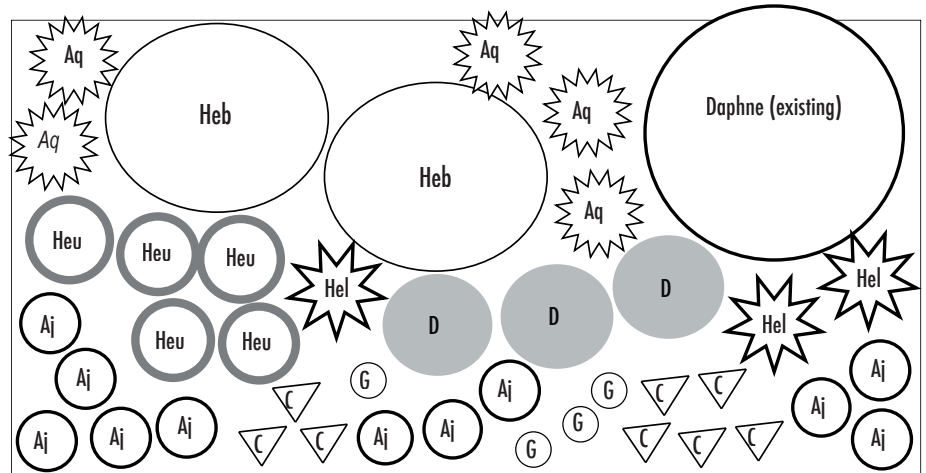
| | Scientific name | Common name | Size | Foliage/Flower | Season |
|----|--|--------------------------------|---------|------------------|----------|
| B | <i>Buddleja davidii</i> 'White Profusion' | white profusion butterfly bush | 5' | green/white | spr/sum |
| C | <i>Cerastium tomentosum</i> | snow-in-summer | 4" | gray/white | spring |
| G | <i>Gypsophila repens</i> 'Alba' | white creeping gypsophila | 6" x 2' | gray/white | spring |
| Mn | <i>Mandevilla laxa</i> | Chilean jasmine | vine | green/white | summer |
| Ms | <i>Miscanthus sinensis</i> 'Cosmopolitan' | striped eulalia grass | 4-5' | striped/tan | sum/fall |
| S | <i>Salvia sclarea</i> 'Turkestanica' | white clary sage | 4' | gray-green/white | spr/sum |
| T | <i>Tanacetum niveum</i> | silver tansy | 2' x 3' | green/white | spr/sum |
| V | <i>Verbascum phoeniceum</i> 'Flush of White' | white purple mullein | 2' x 1' | dark green/white | spring |
| Z | <i>Zephyranthes candida</i> | rain lily | 6-8" | dark green/white | sum/fall |

Planting designs by Ellen Zagory
Graphics by Diane Cary

DRY SHADE GARDEN

Many older homes are shaded by large trees that help cool the house in summer but also make it difficult to grow sun-loving plants. These large trees often have roots that compete with more shallow-rooted perennials for moisture—they can dry the soil quickly in the hot months. Some plants can thrive in these shady areas under trees and can tolerate short periods of dry soil. If your garden faces east and receives direct sun only in the mornings, these plants will grow there as well, as long as they are in shade after 11:00 a.m. during the hot summer months.

You can achieve different color effects by substituting related cultivars for the recommended plants. *Geranium* × *cantabrigiense* ‘St. Ola’ (white) and ‘Cambridge’ (magenta) can substitute for or be mixed with ‘Biokovo’. *Heuchera* ‘Canyon Pink’ can substitute for ‘Lillian’s Pink’ if you prefer a lower-growing, deeper rose-pink flower. Other *Ajuga* and *Aquilegia* cultivars can also be substituted, although we have found these suggested forms to have good vigor and flower display in local gardens.

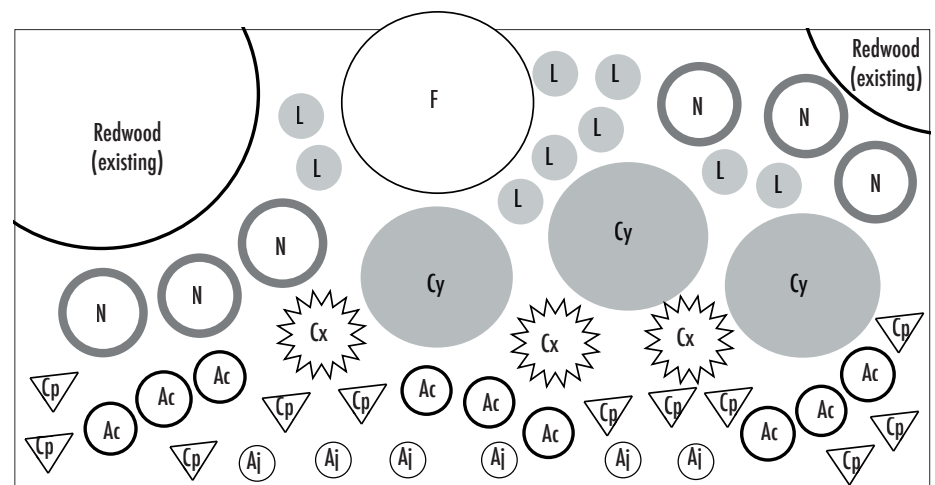


Hardy Shade Garden (irrigation every 7-10 days in summer)

| | Scientific name | Common name | Size | Foliage/Flower | Season |
|-----|---|--------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|---------------|
| Aj | <i>Ajuga reptans</i> ‘Catlin’s Giant’ | bronze carpet bugle | 6", fl to 12" | dark green/deep blue | spring |
| Aq | <i>Aquilegia chrysantha</i> | yellow columbine | 1' × 2' fl. to 3' | gray-green/yellow | spring |
| C | <i>Carex oshimensis</i> ‘Evergold’ | variegated sedge | 1' × 2' | striped mound | all year |
| D | <i>Digitalis</i> ‘Snow Thimble’ | white foxglove | 1' × 2', fl. to 3' | green/white | winter/spring |
| G | <i>Geranium</i> × <i>cantabrigiense</i> ‘Biokovo’ | Croatian hybrid geranium | 6-10" | shiny green/pale pink | spring |
| Heb | <i>Hebe</i> ‘Caledonia’ | Caledonian hebe | 2' × 3' | gray/dark purple | spr/sum |
| Hel | <i>Helleborus argutifolius</i> | Corsican hellebore | 1', fl. to 2' | gray/green | early spr. |
| Heu | <i>Heuchera</i> ‘Lillian’s Pink’ | Lillian’s coral bells | 1', fl. to 18" | green/rich pink | spring |

GARDEN FOR MOIST SHADE

Many gardens have lawns and moisture-loving trees in them (such as redwood trees). Here is a plan that is compatible with the frequent irrigation needed for such tree species. This planting will work with morning sun, “dappled” light, or “high shade” (early morning and late afternoon/early evening sun only in summer). These shade plants can take the sun under deciduous trees in winter.



Moist Shade Garden (irrigation every 4-7 days in summer)

| | Scientific name | Common name | Size | Foliage/Flower | Season |
|----|--|----------------------------------|---------------|----------------------|----------|
| Ac | <i>Acorus gramineus</i> ‘Ogon’ | yellow striped grassy sweet flag | 4-6" | striped foliage | all year |
| Aj | <i>Ajuga reptans</i> ‘Catlin’s Giant’ | bronze carpet bugle | 6", fl to 12" | dark green/deep blue | spring |
| Cp | <i>Campanula poscharskyana</i> | Serbian bellflower | 6" spreading | green/light purple | spring |
| Cx | <i>Carex albula</i> | silver sedge | 1' × 2' | fine foliage | all year |
| Cy | <i>Cyrtomium falcatum</i> ‘Rochefordianum’ | holly fern | 3' × 3' | dark shiny green | all year |
| F | <i>Fuchsia</i> ‘Gartenmeister Bonstedt’ | honeysuckle fuchsia | 3' | green/fuchsia-pink | spr/sum |
| L | <i>Lamium maculatum</i> ‘Pink Pewter’ | pink lamium | 3" spreading | silver-green/pink | spring |
| N | <i>Nephrolepis cordifolia</i> | hardy Boston fern | 2' spreading | apple green | all year |