

## April Gardening Guide

# Spring is a Time to Renew Your Gardens

By Cynthia Brian

“April hath put a spirit of youth in everything.” — William Shakespeare



A well-organized spring garden of rhododendron, breath of heaven, bearded iris, alyssum, calla lily, and pelargonium. Photos Cynthia Brian

The siren song of spring calls my soul to the outdoors as swiftly as the mermaid lures the sailor to the depths of the sea. The fragrance of the blossoms, the colors of blooms, the chirping of the birds, the croaking of the frogs, and the scent of green grasses speak to my deepest being. Our precious earth is in the process of rebirth and no matter how many years I've witnessed this evolution, I am always in awe.

My camera captures thousands of photos, most of which looked so much better with the naked eye, yet I want to record the beauty. I am obsessed with the lilacs, wisteria, iris, freesia, fruit trees, wildflowers and, especially, the soothing sounds of the cascading creeks.

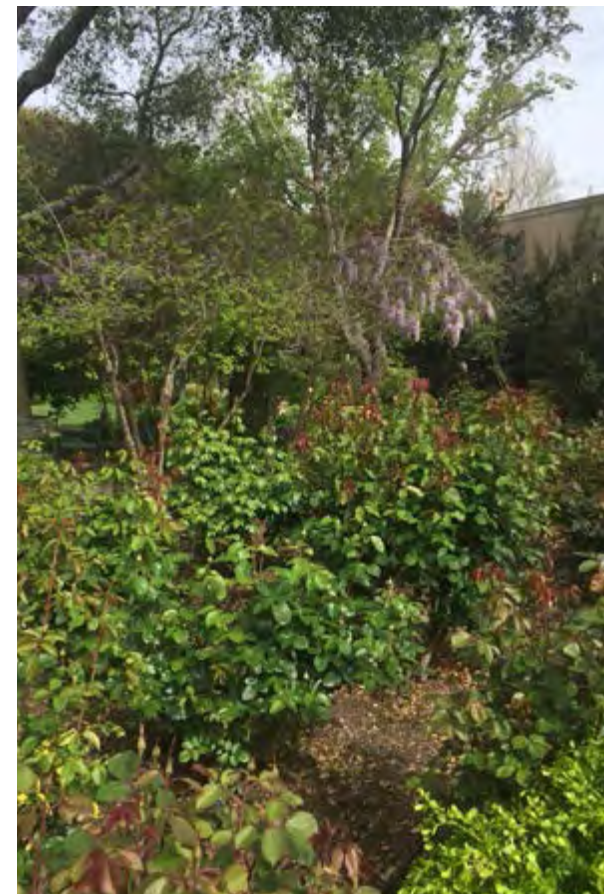
### Spring-How I love thee!

As wild turkeys gobble-gobble along the hillsides

and into our streets — unaware that turkey season is open for those who seek to bag a bird for a barbecue — and as the deer begin to nibble our budding roses, it's wise to consider protecting our delicate plants from our indigenous predators. Wire, netting and fences are our most effective armor. El Nino has been a blessing in quenching our thirsty gardens, especially our lawns, yet the prodigious weeds, if left unattended, will compete with our flowers for moisture in summer. Now is the time to take action.

Every morning as I walk my property, I tell myself I'll spend only an hour in the garden after work. However, the hour quietly melts into three or four and soon I'm weeding by flashlight. This is love. It's springtime in our gardens and fun is pending. Go out and dig.

- **ADD** edible flowers to your dining experience. Plant seeds of hyssop, nasturtium, violet, leaf fennel, daisy and calendula.
  - **SCATTER** seeds of zinnia, cosmos, and marigold seeds for summer blooms.
  - **WEED**, weed, weed. Don't let seed heads develop or you'll have more invasive plants next season.
  - **SOW** onions not only for eating but also as a natural pest control in your garden, especially for brassicas including cabbage, broccoli, collards and kale.
  - **MIX** flowers with edibles to attract pollinators to your spring garden. Make sure to plant in groups so that the birds, bees and butterflies see the dinner you are serving.
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Roses ready to bud