

Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian **Spring into Action**

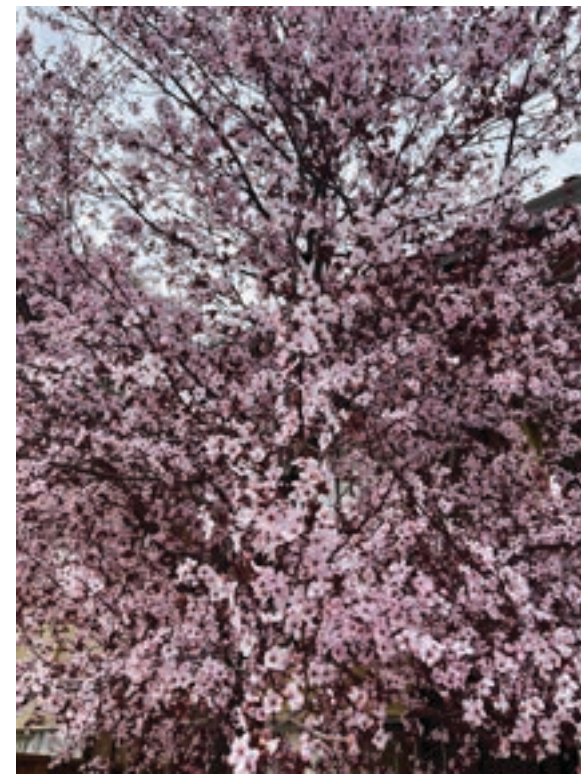
Photos Cynthia Brian



Edible flowers of arugula.



This fluorescent pink azalea blooms in a pot.



The delicate flowers of a flowering plum tree.

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Beware:

A word of caution for the year—ticks are everywhere. They hide in grass, trees, bushes, and weeds. They are bloodsuckers and will attach themselves to you and your pets. They also can migrate from you to someone else or to/from your pet. After being in the garden, make sure to wash your clothes, and your body, and check for ticks. If you find one, do not twist or squeeze. Use a sharp, clean tweezer to lift the tick, and don't touch it with your hands. Wash the area thoroughly with soap and water and apply alcohol. Ticks carry bacteria and can cause Lyme disease, Rocky Mountain spotted fever, and other diseases. If you can't remove the tick, call your physician as soon as possible. Contact your doctor if you experience an allergic reaction. The longer the tick is in your body, the higher your

chances of an infection. If possible, snap a photo of the tick and put it in a jar or Ziplock bag to show the health care professional. According to the California Department of Public Health, "An infected western black-legged tick must be attached to a person and feed for at least 24 hours before it can transmit the bacteria that cause Lyme disease." Find more information at cdph.ca.gov.

The tick I pulled from my shoulder was small and I couldn't save it or photograph it. Yet, my shoulder is still swollen and sore from the toxins. I will now follow recommendations to apply 20% DEET before going into the fields. I will also wear Insect Shield® permethrin-infused long sleeves, despite the heat.

Spring Action:

We have much work to do now that spring has sprung. It is time to get our hands in the dirt. In one week, we experienced torrential

rain, followed by hurricane-force winds, and then the sweet sunshine of perfect days. The wild weather reminded me of a quote from Mark Twain: "In the Spring, I have counted 136 different kinds of weather inside of 24 hours."

Weeds sprouted like beanstalks while flowers, shrubs, and trees burst from bud to bloom. It's going to be a long and arduous task for me to weed my hillside as the flowers and weeds are intermingled, which means that each weed must be plucked by the root by hand. No weed whackers allowed else all the flowers and perennials would be destroyed. What's on your to-do list?

Check irrigation systems and test sprinklers. If you have a lawn, the sprinkler heads may be buried underneath a mat of new grass.

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