

# Cynthia Brian's Gardening Guide for April

**SPLASH** your barbecue grill with white vinegar then scrub with half an onion to clean the grates and get ready for outside dining.

**BUFF** your garden tools by plunging them in a five-gallon bucket of sand mixed with a cup of vegetable oil. The sand will keep them sharper and the oil wards off rust. Small hand tools can be stored in the sand bucket.

**PLANT** frost tender plants as the weather warms towards the end of the month. Ground covers, citrus, bougainvillea, and summer annuals are available for purchase.

**SOW** seeds of scarlet runner bean, sweet peas, or morning glories to climb on fences and wire.

**RESIST** cutting back the dying leaves of narcissi and daffodils. The fronds are gathering their nutrition for next year's blooms. Cut them back only when as dry as potato chips.

**BAIT** the snails and slugs, pick them off by hand, use copper barriers, or bowls of beer. These slimy crawlers will devour new seedlings.

**BUY** ladybugs from your nursery or garden center if you see aphids or other pests on your plants. Remember ladybugs fly to infested gardens.

**VISIT** the Be the Star You Are! booth at the Moraga Faire 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday, May 13 to get a bag of complimentary spring potpourri. Bring your gardening questions and I'll be there to answer them. [www.BetheStarYouAre.org/events](http://www.BetheStarYouAre.org/events).

**SELECT** appropriate plants in one- or two-gallon pots for your shade garden. Smaller sizes don't root as quickly. Hostas, ferns, vinca minor, anemones, begonias and impatiens mingle beautifully without much sunlight.

**PLANT** purple anything this spring and be delighted all year.

**WEED**, weed, weed. Because of the heavy rains this year, weeds are ubiquitous, yet easy to pull. If they don't have seed heads, add to your compost pile.

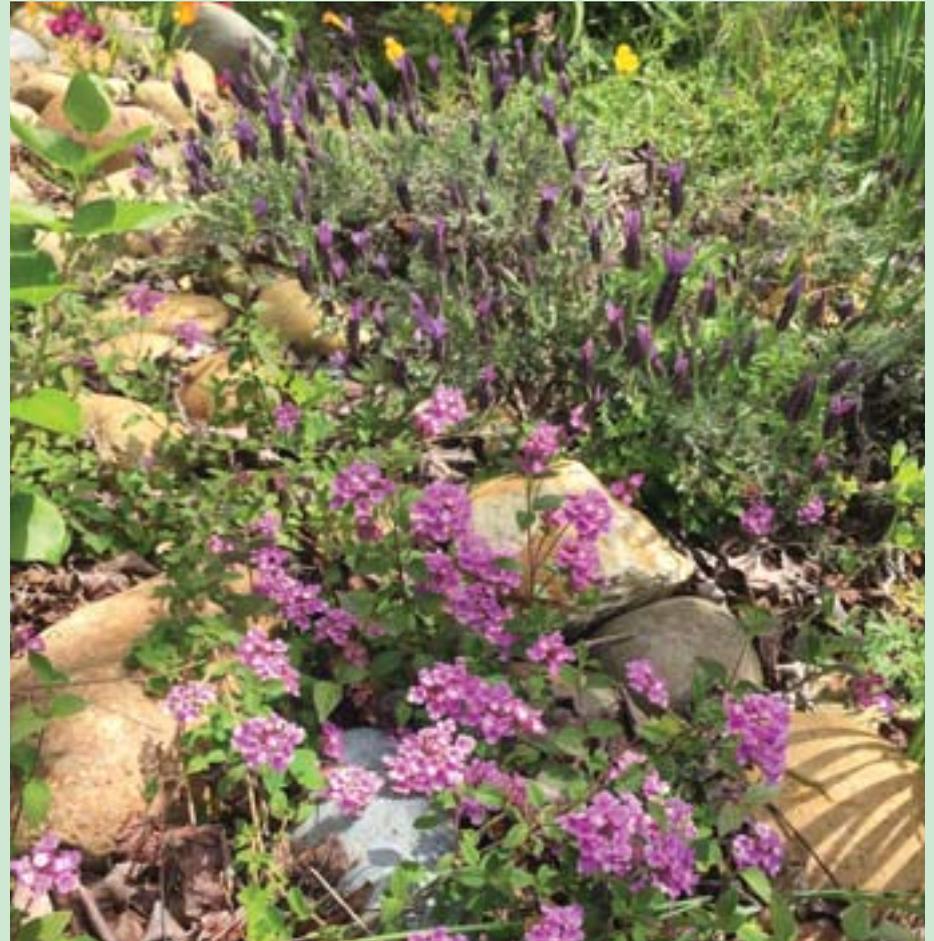
**PREORDER** my forthcoming garden book, "Growing with the Goddess Gardener," Book I in the Garden Shorts Series. All preorders will receive extra goodies such as heirloom seeds, bookmarks and more. Email me for details, [Cynthia@GoddessGardener.com](mailto:Cynthia@GoddessGardener.com). Twenty-five percent of the proceeds benefit the 501c3 Be the Star You Are! charity.

**Win \$50,000 for your Garden:** As a judge in America's Best Gardener Contest, I encourage you to enter your best garden photo. The top prize is \$50,000. [www.americas-bestgardener.com](http://www.americas-bestgardener.com).

**BUY** a beautiful potted purple lavender plant to show your love for your mother or anyone's mom's on Mother's Day.

A heartfelt shout out to every mom! You are the nurturers and our teachers. Happy Mother's Day! Let it rain purple.

Happy Gardening and Happy Growing!



*Lantana and lavender comingle in rock garden.*



*Purple vetch is a nitrogen-rich cover crop.*