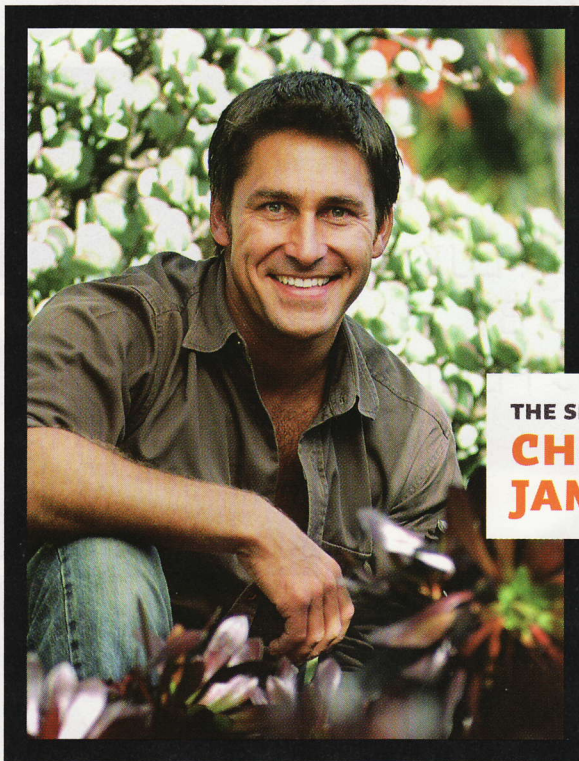


APRIL CHECKLIST

□ GET ECO-FRIENDLY GARDEN GLOVES We love West County Gardener's new Landscape Gloves (\$28), which are made in part from recycled water bottles. They're comfortable, with padded palms and spandex backs, which make digging, hoeing, raking, and handling big pots, pavers, and plants easier on your hands. Find them at westcountygardener.com, and at independent nurseries and garden centers.

□ WEAR INSECT-REPELLENT CLOTHES Clothing, accessories, and hats can repulse insects when the repellent is bonded in. Try products treated with Insect Shield, which uses permethrin, an odorless synthetic version of a natural pesticide whose human toxicity is so low, it requires no warnings on the label, but whose toxicity to mosquitoes, ticks, fleas, midges, and other insects is very high, even after 70 washings. Try treated hats and bandannas from Seattle-based ExOfficio (exofficio.com); and treated pants, shirts, and hats from REI (rei.com). See insectshield.com for other products and sources. —JIM McCAUSLAND



THE SMART GARDENER

CHOCOLATE PLANTS: JAMIE'S TOP PICKS

Jamie Durie, host of *The Victory Garden* television series on PBS, loves plants whose foliage provides contrast and punch all year. Here are three of his top picks for gardens in the West; all look stunning beside plants with variegated or lime-colored leaves.



EUPATORIUM RUGOSUM 'CHOCOLATE' Shrub. Bronzy, lance-shaped leaves on plants reaching 4 feet tall and 2 feet wide. Fluffy white flowers in late summer and fall. *Sunset* climate zones 1–10, 14–17.



AEONIUM (A. ARBOREUM) Succulent. 'Zwartkop' (pictured) produces giant, 6- to 8-inch nearly black rosettes on stems up to 3 feet tall. Zones 15–17, 20–24.



HEUCHERA HYBRIDS Perennial. Many mounding varieties, reaching 8 inches to 2 feet tall, have maroon or brown foliage, including 'Chocolate Ruffles', 'Dolce Licorice', 'Obsidian', and 'Plum Pudding' (pictured). Zones 1–9, 14–24.

Problem-solver

Finding the right plants

IF YOU HAVE ...	AND YOU WANT ...	TRY ...
Deep shade	Colorful flowers	Impatiens, tuberous begonias
Boggy soil	Showy perennials	Gunnera, hosta, monkshood
A rocky slope	Alpine plants	Lewisia, dwarf <i>Pieris japonica</i> , dwarf rhododendron, saxifrage
A windy site	Evergreen shrubs	Escallonia, juniper, Pacific wax myrtle



SMART TIP BUY SMALL

Plants in 4-inch pots cost less than those in 1-gallon cans, and they can establish just as fast.