From: Paul Parent Garden Club < newsletter@paulparentclub.com>

Sent: Friday, September 14, 2012 9:18 AM

To: rickmorin@earthlink.net

Subject: Paul Parent Garden Club News - September 14, 2012

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### Paul Parent Garden Club News

September 14, 2012

### Featured Quote:

"My green thumb came only as a result of the mistakes I made while learning to see things from the plant's point of view."

~ H. Fred Ale

### Gifts for the Gardener

Here are some great ideas for gifts your favorite gardener will just love!

### Hi-Yield Turf Ranger

- Broad spectrum residual insecticide for the control of certain insects in home lawns
- Controls: Ants, Armyworms, Chinch Bugs, Crickets, Fire Ants, Fleas, Grasshoppers, Scorpions, Spiders, Ticks, European Crane Fly and many others.

For more information, visit the Ferti-lome website.

the egg-laying season for next spring.

If you think back about last spring, it started early after a mild winter and the spring changed to a summer that was hot, humid and dry. Now fall is almost here and the weather continues to stay mild, so entomologists from across the nation are finding that the tick population is still building—and that could mean major problems for next year. Because it got so warm so early, the ticks came out of dormancy early and have had extra time to mature, mate, and prepare for

Right now, the adult ticks are still feeding in preparation for a long winter sleep to prepare for the egg laying in the spring. Because of the mild year, few ticks have died due to weather conditions, and populations have soared to record highs. Here is the life cycle of a tick and how it can affect you and your pets this fall and next spring.

Ticks have three primary stages of development: larval, nymphal, and adult. Each stage requires a special host to feed on to move on to the next stage of growth to complete the life cycle—and that life cycle takes one year to complete. In the spring when the adult emerges from its long winter of hibernation, each female tick is ready to lay up to 3000 eggs on the ground during the spring season--WOW! When the eggs hatch,small larvae will emerge and begin to feed on small mammals and birds for the spring and into early summer.

They then fall from the host to the ground and molt to the nymph stage. While still on the ground, they look for a new host like deer, cats, dogs and yes YOU. This is the most dangerous stage for disease transmitted problems like Lyme Disease. At this stage they are the size of a poppy seed and grow very quickly in size from the fresh blood source. This stage can last from several months to a year depending on the blood supply. When they have achieved maximum growth they then fall off and molt again but this time to the adult stage. Many ticks are in this stage now, feeding and preparing to lay eggs for next spring. The female is the most active, because she needs blood to help produce eggs while the male feeds very little and is content to stay on the large host primarily for mating with the female.

Ticks are in the spider family--Arachnids--and have eight legs, which have two uses. Motion is one but the additional use is as a unique sensory organ known as the "Haller's organ" which can detect odor and chemicals on the body of potential host. This organ can also sense changes in temperature to help the tick prepare for the season ahead. Ticks prefer a climate that is warm and humid, as they require a certain amount of moisture in the air in order to undergo the three stages of metamorphosis. Low temperatures will slow down the development from egg to larva and that is why we have a problem this fall. We had a mild winter last year and mild and early spring this year, and that is causing concern right now.

Ticks prefer a sandy soil, and hardwood trees like oaks, maples, ash, and birch. They also prefer areas with streams, rivers, ponds, and lakes. Their favorite large host is the deer, their favorite small hosts are mice and chipmunks--and if you live in an area with most of these necessities, you can expect to have tick problems.

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Where can I find Paul on Sunday mornings?

Click here to find Paul Parent

There are several ways to reduce the population of ticks on your property--and fall and spring Garden Club™ radio stations. are the best time to do that. If you have property that is mostly grass, with some open fields or partially wooded, I would recommend that you treat the open areas with a product like Bayer Complete Insect Killer granules, Bonide Flea and Tick Granules or Hi-Yield Turf Ranger Granules--and apply NOW so the rain can dissolve the product and activate the active ingredients to start killing the adults before they go into hibernation when the temperatures begin to cool off. All these products will also kill fleas when they are applied on your property, so they do not come into your home with your pets and get into your rugs and furniture.

In the spring, apply in early May to control ticks coming out of hibernation that you may miss this fall. These products should last for several weeks, killing the adults as they emerge when the weather warms up. If you have a fenced-in yard or small yard you can also use the readyto-spray products that you apply with the garden hose, and they will also be very effective.

Now, if you want to control the problem without using a chemical application on your lawn, you can also control the nymphal stage in the spring or fall with a unique product called "Tick Tubes." This is a cardboard cylinder filled with cotton that has been treated with a mild pesticide called permethrin. All you have to do is spread these tubes around your property like near a tool shed, firewood, under a deck or on the edges of your wooded areas or fields for the mice to pick up the treated cotton for bedding. Mice and chipmunks are now (and will be again in the spring) preparing a place to live and will use this this nice, soft material. The permethrin in the product will kill the nymphs that are on these rodents without hurting the rodents. This method is 90% effective because it works on the host to kill the ticks.

All these products work very well and if you have children, pets or you spend time in the garden you might want to think about doing something VERY soon to reduce the problem now and again in the spring. These products are an investment in the health of your family and

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Have you ever walked into a garden center looking for a package of grass seed and found yourself looking at a wall filled with many different type of blended grass seed packages and wondered, "Which is right for me?" It's almost as confusing as going to the grocery store and trying to pick a box of cereal for breakfast! (I think I will have toast.)

Here is what I want you to do before you go to the garden center this fall. Take a piece of paper and answer these questions before you leave. How big is the area, length by width; if not sure pace it off and write down how many paces; the store attendant can help you determine the size of the area to be seeded.

- Is the area sunny or shady?
- If a combination of the two, when is it sunny and when is it shady, how long for each and at what time of the day is it sunny or shady?
- Now take a shovel or garden trowel and dig a hole in the area to be seeded and see how deep the top soil is, 3 inches...6 inches deep? it will matter.
- Also what is under the top soil; sand, clay, yellow hard pan? It will make a difference in the seed you will need to use. Is the area flat, does it slope or is it on the side of a hill? When it rains does the water sit on the surface? If so, how long?
- Do you have trees growing on this area to be seeded? Will you be adding seed under the trees, and are the trees evergreen or leaf type?
- Is there moss growing on this area now; have you ever applied lime or lime products to this area?
- Have you ever had a soil test done? Are you adding new top soil over the existing soil--and how much new soil?
- If there is grass growing there now, how much of the area is grass compared to weeds...or are you starting from scratch?
- Have you used a weed killer product on this area lately, like Turf Builder Plus 2 or a Crabgrass preventer plus fertilizer. How long ago?
- What will happen to the lawn when it is all growing and green: kids playing on it occasionally, or every day, football, baseball, or are you just going to look at it?
- Do you have an irrigation system or do you drag out the hose when it needs to be watered? Or do you not water the lawn at all during the summer months?
- Does your town have a water ban every summer?
- Do you fertilize it during the year? How often will it be fed, with organic or regular lawn food and will you use a weed killer if needed?

### Have a Look **Around Our Website:**



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| • | Do you have animals and are they allowed to play on the grass, like a fenced in back yard?   |  |  |
|---|--|--|--|
|   | Is the lawn area wide open to the wind and is it windy there?  |  |  |
| • | Are you on the street (possible road salt), near a pond or wetlands?   |  |  |
| • | How often do you cut your lawn and how short or tall do you like it?   |  |  |
| • | One last questiondo you care what the neighbors think about your lawn, do you just want it green or do you want the perfect lawn and the best on the street?   |  |  |
|   | (Maybe I will buy Cheerios for breakfast!)   |  |  |
|   | If you still want to plant grass seed, take this information to the garden center and they will help you select the right grass seed combination for your new lawn. In the Northeast you will have five families of grass seed to choose from and I want you to know how they work and where they will work best for you. There are many different types of varieties of each family member and I will leave that to the garden center expert to determine for you.  |  |  |
|   | #1 Kentucky Bluegrass is dark green, with a medium textured blade. Bluegrass can spread by making tillers and underground rhizomes, and they have the ability to make a tight-knit attractive turf. Your seed will make a new plant and as that plant matures, the plant can send out these underground rhizomes and tillers to make new plants, as a strawberry plant sends out new runners. These runners will help to thicken your lawn when it is fed regularly. Bluegrass does best in a heavy soil that is well drained and has good fertility, so it must be fed several times a year, every 6 to 8 weeks to stay thick. Water requirement is moderate to high during the summer months. If watering is a problem, the grass will lose some of its color but it will recover quickly when moisture returns.   |  |  |
|   | Mowing height is 1 1/2 to 2 1/2 inchesbut taller during the heat of summer is recommended. The plant is more upright growing and the only type of grass plant that is self-spreading with runners. Bluegrass will do best in full sun to a bit of shade late in the day or first thing in the morning. It is not recommended for shady areas as the main seed type. The size of the seed is small and the cost is more expensive than most because you get more seed per pound than most others varieties. Bluegrass will take as long as 3 weeks to germinate so be patient and keep watering to insure good germination. Once it germinates it will grow as fast as the other varieties of seed. If you want a SOD LAWN look, you will have to use a high bluegrass blend of seed. Bluegrass lawns will give you the best looking lawn but they will require the most maintenance and care so you might want to consider a blend with other types of grass seed. |  |  |
|   | #2 Fine Fescue Grass is medium green, and like its name has thin and narrow blades of grass. Fine fescue will also spread with tillers and short creeping rhizome type underground stems. Fine fescue is used extensively in seed blends designed for sun and shade situations. This grass seed will germinate quickly, establish itself quickly and make a wonderful nursery grass to provide protection against erosion for a slower growing grass like bluegrass problems early on. Because this grass seed germinates quickly you will see things happening fast and it will encourage you to keep watering and caring for the new seedlings.  |  |  |
|   | The fine fescue family also includes 'Chewing' fescue and 'Creeping Red' fescue, making this family of grasses possible to grow almost anywhere in your lawn no matter where you are planting it. Sun or shadethis is the most versatile family of turf grasses used in blended seed for turf use today. Also, insect problems are very few with these grass plants. Their biggest problem is that you must plant the seed more heavily than most because many of the varieties grow in clumps and do not spread readily in the lawn.  |  |  |
|   | You would not plant just fine fescue grass alone as a lawn but when blended with other varieties of Creeping and Tall fescue it will make a wonderful lawn. Great in low fertility or partial shade areas, it will also tolerate road salt better than most. Periods of hot and dry weather will cause color change and it is not as drought tolerant as bluegrass unless you do not cut it and allow it to grow on its own and become more natural. Mow at a height of 1 1/2 to 2 1/2 inches tall or allow to mature and grow wild and natural at 6 to 8 incheslow maintenance like an eco-Lawn. As a natural lawn, fertilize spring and fall. You can also mow the grass only once a month as it does not grow as fast as bluegrass, saving you time.  |  |  |
|   |  |  |  |

#3 Tall Fescue grass is medium to dark green, and new hybrids have a wonderful medium texture like bluegrass does. Tall fescue will grow in clumps and will not make a thick lawn all by itself and is better used in a blend of seeds. It is extremely tough and will tolerate a lot of use like athletic fields and lawns with heavy traffic, so bring on the kids. This is a wonderful grass seed to blend with bluegrass seed when planting a new lawn or thickening an existing thin growing lawn.

Tall fescue has a very large growing root system and a root system that grows deep in the soil, making it perfect for soils on the sandy side. Roots can grow as deep as 2 feet or more in the ground and will perform very well in periods of heavy moisture or extended drought. Once established it will even stay green longer during summer drought and perform better than most other varieties of grass.

Mow this grass higher in your lawn at 2 to 3 inches tall cutting height--and taller during the heat of summer. Fertilize spring and fall but any additional fertilizer will create a very thick weed- free lawn. Taller growing lawns always tend to keep out more weeds than those cut short, and this grass does love to stay taller growing. Taller growing lawns also need less watering and less mowing during the season. Tall fescue is often used in areas where it is difficult to grow grass and it does make a wonderful

plant to prevent erosion on slopes and steep hillsides. The seed will germinate very quickly, sometimes as fast as only a week, making it perfect when blended with slow germinating bluegrass seed. Tall fescue will also tolerate wet spots in your yard better than most.

Look for the new hybrids always as they will have a better texture in your lawn. Keep away from a variety called "Kentucky 31 Tall Fescue" because the blades of grass are very wide and coarse looking. However, it is very important to note that Tall fescue has fewer problems with insects than most other types of grass seed and disease problems are minimal.

#4 Perennial Rye Grass is dark green with medium to coarse leaf blade. Use hybrid varieties and stay away from "Common Perennial Ryegrass," as this old variety has a very coarse blade; it lies down easily when mowing, making your lawn look unruly. Perennial rye grass was once the best nursery grass to hold the soil together when seeding a new lawn but has now been replaced with tall fescue hybrids. This is a good inexpensive grass to blend with other seed and to use for sloping areas where the grass does not have to be perfect. It will germinate quickly and in warm soil just 3 to 4 days. The established plant will spread with tillers but is must be blended with other types of grass seed to create a good tight-knit turf; never use alone. Perennial rye grass will not tolerate hot or cool humid growing conditions for long periods, especially wet cool springs. Clay soil or soil that stays wet could become a problem because of disease.

Perennial rye grass should be fertilized spring and fall but it will do much better if you add a third feeding in late summer. Cut the grass at 1 1/2 to 2 1/2 inches tall and taller during the summer months. The stems are weak and the grass does tend to fall over, so it will look better when mixed with other grass varieties. If you plant just perennial rye you will have a problem mowing the lawn, especially when it is wet, because it grows on soft stems and not upright like many other types of grasses. It is a great grass to blend with bluegrass seed when you have a heavily used area in your yard. Insect and disease problems are minimal and it will give you good year-round performance.

**#5** Annual Rye Grass at one time was used widely to help retain the soil when using slow-germinating grasses like bluegrass but with the new perennial rye grasses and new tall fescue of today, it is no longer used in a quality seed blend. Remember that this is an "annual grass seed" and when the weather gets cold and the ground freezes it will die! If your seed blend has a lot of annual grass seed in the blend, the results will be a lawn in the spring with many open areas in your newly planted lawn. Pay a bit more for a seed blend that is all perennial; all your hard work will survive the winter and your new lawn will stay thick over the winter.

#6 Zoysia Grass is a warm weather grass and it will live in the Northeast and other parts of the country with cold weather and thrive very well. This is a wonderful fast growing grass that will quickly take over the area where it is planted but there is one major problem in a cold climate with this grass plant. The big problem is that the period that it is green is very short with cold weather! When you receive a good killing frost in the fall it will quickly turn brown; it will not die but your lawn will turn brown from middle to late September until the spring arrives. Now, in the spring, it will be brown while all other lawns will quickly green up in April. In May, possibly even as late as early June it will begin to green up as the soil and air temperature warm up.

In the Northeast and cold climate areas, it is beautiful for basically 4 months--June to September--and brown the other 8 months. There is one other problem with this grass plant and that problem is that the plant is unstoppable; it will take over your yard very quickly, choking out everything in its path. It moves quickly and will grow into flower beds creating a maintenance nightmare in planting areas, even those that have a thick layer of bark mulch. If you live from Washington D.C. south it will be green for 6 to 7 months but north of that stay away from this type of lawn!!!

One last thing to look for on the grass seed label:

- 1) Percentage of seed type by weight in the bag: bluegrass seed is small and it takes more seed per pound than perennial rye grass; 1 perennial rye grass seed weighs as much as 10 bluegrass seeds, so less bluegrass could give you more seed per bag. More bluegrass seed gives you better quality in the bag, up to 10 times more possible plants by the weight of the box of seed.
- 2) Other crop seed: not a noxious weed, but a weed that will grow in your lawn. Not acceptable!
- 3) Weed seed: percent by weight in the box. Not acceptable!
- 4) Inert Matter: Percent by weight in the box, filler such as seed hulls and grass stems found in cheap seed blends. Not acceptable!
- 5) Noxious Weeds: accept nothing but NONE FOUND printed on the label! If you do, you're planting problem weeds that are difficult to control!
- 6) Germination percentage of the seed variety must be 85% or higher. If you accept 50 % germination, for example, that means that only half of the bag will grow if things are perfect. Not acceptable!
- 7) Test date: This tells you when the seed was packaged and it MUST be this year's date or the percentage of seed expected to germinate will be less than listed--a real problem for you!

Use this as a guide and with the help of a knowledgeable person at your local garden center or nursery, you will have a wonderful looking lawn for all the work, time, and money you put into it. This is not the time to save a dollar unless you want to do this again in the near future. Good luck!

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It truly amazes me that insects know that the seasons are beginning to change and they know it's time to get inside your home for the winter where it will be nice and warm. If you own a cat or dog, this is the time of the year to get prepared for fleas to move in. Fleas are a real nuisance pest once they get a foothold in your home, and can be quite difficult to remove completely. If you're not sure if you have fleas in your home yet it's easy to tell, because they begin by biting your ankles as you sit on the couch watching TV. So do you have an itching sensation yet that is followed with scratching and the appearance of small swollen red bite

marks? If yes, you have fleas and if not treated it will get worse for your pets and YOU.

Flea bites are more than annoying because that can cause allergies to your pets and you from their saliva, (spit). This often causes a rash to develop with a slightly raised swollen itchy spot like a mosquito bite. Unlike mosquitoes, you will have several bites on your body when they get active and if your pets are not treated, they will begin to scratch uncontrollably and begin to lose their hair. All this is from an insect less than 1/8 of an inch long. If you live where rodents are a common sight, even just a mouse, just remember that such problems as the Bubonic Plague passed between rodents and humans by fleas carrying the bacteria. So if you have pets like dogs, cats, rabbits, ferrets, mice or even raise chickens in your back yard, be prepared--and even your nice gray squirrel can leave them on your door step or deck to enter your home on your shoes or pool towels.

Fleas are difficult to see, so here is a quick description for you to remember if you feel something biting you or your pets. They are reddish-brown, wingless and are laterally compressed with all their legs on the front of the body and just behind the head, big body, and small head. They bite with piercing-sucking mouthparts through which they obtain blood from your body. Fleas can live a year or more if they can get blood regularly.

Fleas have four life stages: egg, larva, pupa, and adult. The flea life cycle cannot begin until the female has had blood to make her eggs fertile and when she begins to lay those eggs she will lay 20 plus to begin. The eggs are laid on the host and because they are round many fall off onto your floor, carpet or where your pet or you sleep. The eggs hatch in two day to two weeks and the larvae that emerges from the egg will feed on organic matter like feces, dead insects or even vegetable matter. When they are young they are blind and avoid sunlight, so they hide in bedding or cracks and crevices in carpeting or on the floor.

If they get enough food they will spin a silken cocoon in a week or two after they have had 3 larval stages and in another week or two emerge as an adult flea. Their main goal now is to find blood and reproduce. Now, they only have about a week to do so or they will die--so keeping the carpet and bedding clean is a real must-do. Once they get established in your home, this is what you can expect to find on your pet and furniture: 50% eggs, 35% larvae, 10% pupae, and only 5% adults. Fleas can live for a year or more if untreated, and each female flea can lay 5000 or more eggs during her lifetime--and that is why they multiply so quickly.

The best way to control fleas is to get them before they come into your home! Treat your pets with vet-recommended treatments on a regular basis, especially during the summer months, as fleas need humidity and warm temperatures over 70 degrees to multiply quickly. Once the outside temperatures fall below 70 degrees and the humidity dries out, the life cycle becomes interrupted. Also frequent vacuuming will help a lot to remove the adults that develop in carpeting and in cracks in flooring. Pet bedding should also be washed often to remove potential problems. When you vacuum your home for fleas, be sure to dispose of the bags outside of your home. If all fails you can use flea bombs once you remove your pets from the

building and follow the recommendations on the label. Outside control is your best bet, with a granular pesticide for fleas and ticks such as Turf Ranger Granules from Fertilome, Bayer Complete Insect Control, or Bonide Flea And Tick Granules. Apply right now to areas your pets frequent or, if your yard is fenced in, treat the entire area and the problem will be destroyed once the product is watered in or it rains out. Summer application in early July is the most effective as the temperature and humidity levels are at their prime to encourage quick flea development. But fall applications right now will be very effective to keep them out for the winter ahead. I have 4 small dogs and if I do not do this the fleas will take over the house and feed on me as well as the dogs. Click to print this article. Alaska trip Paul Parent will be hosting a tour that includes: Vancouver, BC Butchart Gardens--55 acres of floral display! Cruising the Inside Passage: Ketchikan Icy Strait Point Juneau Skagway **Hubbard Glacier Cruising** Seward Scenic Drive to Anchorage Denali National Park Fairbanks City Tour, a tour of the Gold Dredge # 8 and a cruise down the Chena river on the Riverboat Discovery Sternwheeler. Click here for more information. This Week's Question Most people know that some ticks can carry Lyme disease. Which of the following is another tick-borne illness? Chicken Pox Dengue Fever Malaria Mumps Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever

А. В.

C.

D.

### This Week's Prize: Liquid Plant THRIVE Soil Conditioner & Mycorrhizal Root Stimulator--perfect for seedlings and growing plants of all types. The hottest gardening product for 2012! From existing plants to seedlings--THRIVE helps plants get off on the right "root." The beginning is often the most important part of your plants' lives. Maintaining soil quality for them to grow is imperative. Liquid Plant THRIVE contains a concentrated dose of the microbes already found in nature that will ensure a strong root system, require less watering and help you do your part for the environment. For more information, see the THRIVE website. **Click Here to Answe** Last Week's Question:

What is the popular name for the Antirrhinum genus of plants?

### Last Week's Winner:

Arlene Sampson

### Last Week's Answer:

Snapdragon

### Last Week's Prize:

Liquid Plant THRIVE

One winner per question - we choose winners from the list of those who answer correctly. Winners must be newsletter subscribers. We'll ship you your prize, so be sure to put your address in the form in case you win!

Are you looking for a great gift for a gardener (or yourself)? This garden journal helps make planning and organizing easy. This journal, autographed personally by Paul, makes a perfect gift for gardeners. The cover holds a 5x7 or 4x6 photo and a heavy-duty D-ring binder.

### Also included:

- 8 tabbed sections
- 5 garden details sections with pockets for seeds, tags...
- Weather records page
- 6 three year journal pages
- Insect & diseases page 3 project pages
- 3 annual checklist pages
- Plant wish list page
- 2 large pocket pages
- Sheet of garden labels
- 5 garden detail sheets
- 5 graph paper pages for layouts
- 5 photo pages, each holding four 4x6 photos in landscape or portrait format

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# Featured Recipe:

## Gluten Free Chocolate Almond Cheesecake



Finding gluten-free--and tasty--desserts can be a challenge. Here is a no-bake chocolate almond cheesecake that is yummy and decadent (but safe for celiac disease sufferers).

### Ingredients:

- 2 cups finely ground almonds
- 1/4 cup butter, melted
- 1 cup dark brown sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
- 3 packages (24 ounces) cream cheese, softened
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 2 tablespoons rice flour (or other gluten-free flour)
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1/2 teaspoon almond extract
- 8 squares baking chocolate, melted

### Step by Step:

- On a baking sheet, toast almonds at 325 degrees F for 3 minutes (or until golden brown). Remove from pan and cool completely and grind into a fine powder.
- Combine ground almonds, dark brown sugar, melted butter and cinnamon, mixing well
- Press mixture into a parchment lined 13x9 inch pan (you may also line pan in foil if desired). Coat parchment or foil with nonstick spray.
- Bake crust at 325 degrees F for 14-18 minutes (or until pale golden color). Cool completely.
- In a mixing bowl beat softened cream cheese, sugar, rice flour, vanilla and almond extracts until smooth.
- Add slightly cooled, melted baking chocolate and fold into smooth cheesecake filling
- Carefully spoon cream cheese into cooled almond crust.
- Refrigerate at least 3 hours, until set.
- · Before serving, sprinkle with slivered almonds and chocolate curls.

### Yield: 4 servings.

Recipe courtesy of "Cooking for Pleasure" by Jeanine Harsen.







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