

From: Paul Parent Garden Club <newsletter@paulparentclub.com>
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Edition 11.02	Paul Parent Garden Club News	January 14, 2011
 <p>Featured Quote:</p> <p>"I am writing in the garden. To write as one should of a garden one must write not outside it or merely somewhere near it, but in the garden." ~ Frances Hodgson Burnett</p> <p style="text-align: center;">□</p> <p>This spring, when you are considering planting something new in your yard, and are considering a tree, look into the <i>Ginkgo biloba</i>. The ginkgo has existed on this planet for over 150 million years. The leaf of the ginkgo tree has been found in diggings where dinosaur's remains have been found. The leaf has a very unusual shape, and once seen is not easily forgotten. The ginkgo leaf is in the shape of a fan, 2 to 3 inches long and wide. During the spring to fall seasons, the leaves are bright green in color but when the cold temperatures of fall arrive, they quickly change to bright yellow. When all leaves are a bright yellow color, they will drop to the ground in just a day or two. You will never forget the sight of the leafless tree with a ring of bright yellow leaves around it.</p> <p>Ginkgo trees are easy to grow and will survive from Maine to Florida, and west to California. They will not tolerate wet soils at all. They grow well as street trees, trees for a park or on your front lawn. They love the sunshine and, when young, tend to grow open and unruly. As the tree ages, it will fill in all the holes and become very dense. The ginkgo has an upright growing habit to a height of 75 feet tall and 50 feet wide. When you purchase this tree make sure it is a <i>male</i> tree! Unlike most trees, that have male and female flowers on the same tree, this tree comes in different sexes. The female tree produces fruit that when ripe will have a very rancid smell. The fruit is edible but you do not want the mess. Your local nursery usually carries the male plant but ask for the male plant to be safe. The male tree has flowers that look like catkin and the female has two ovule-shaped petals on a long stem. The fruit looks like a small plum. Insect and disease problems are minimal. Care for this tree as you would any other tree on your property.</p> <p>The fruit is eaten in Asia and the seeds are used to treat cancer and promote digestion problems. Oriental medicine uses the leaves to help sluggish circulation and improve memory and concentration. Work on the ginkgo tree for migraines and Alzheimer's is also being done.</p> <p>This is not a fast growing tree and is some time called the "Grandfather-Grandchild Tree," as it takes up to 3 generations to mature to 75 feet. You grow this tree for its unusual foliage and fall color, as well as its history. The ginkgo was once thought to be extinct, but was found in Eastern China. Seeds were sent to all parts of the Orient by explorers. In the 1700 Century, seeds from the ginkgo were sent from Japan to Europe, were they were grown and treasured for their beauty. Japan has many tree estimated to be over 1000 years old and many were planted near temples, as they were thought to be sacred.</p> <p>In 1945, the city of Hiroshima in Japan was bombed with the atomic bomb. Every living thing around the epicenter of the blast was destroyed. The exception was 4 remarkable ginkgo trees that survived, and in the following spring flowered, their remaining branches becoming filled with leaves. All 4 trees are still thriving today. Ever since then, the Japanese people regard the ginkgo as the "bearer of hope". When visiting Japan, look for the trees. Plaques on them bear prayers for world peace.</p> <p>Click to print this article.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">□</p> <p>Growing herbs can be as simple as planting a few seeds in a pot of soil, right now! All you need is a sunny or brightly lit window to grow the secret ingredients for the winter salad or special pasta sauce.</p> <p>Herbs love the sunlight and the warmer the sun is, the better they love it. Just think of the fragrance of a new pot of basil, chives or parsley will give your kitchen window. Crush the leaves with your fingers, roll the foliage in the palm of your hand and place it into a fresh bowl of salad greens. Your family will ask you what you did differently to the salad--and believe me it's not the taste of the tomatoes during the winter! Herbs are easy to grow and will do better if you don't put a lot of time with them. Water, fertilize and pick often to encourage new growth. After all, the new growth has more fragrance and taste than older growth.</p>		<p>Gifts for the Gardener</p> <p>Here are some great ideas for gifts your favorite gardener will just love!</p> <p>Contact Information:</p> <p>E-Mail: Click to contact us.</p> <p>Telephone: (207) 985-6972 (800) 259-9231 (Sunday 6 AM to 10 AM)</p> <p>Fax: (207) 985-6972</p> <p>Address: Paul Parent Garden Club 2 Blueberry Pines Dr Kennebunk, ME 04043</p> <p>Phone Hours: Monday-Saturday 8 AM to 6 PM Sunday: 10 AM to 6 PM</p> <p>Where can I find Paul on Sunday mornings?</p> <p>Click here to find Paul Parent Garden Club™ radio stations.</p> <p>A Customized Gardening Tour of Ireland</p> <p>Join us for a journey to the beautiful gardens of the Emerald Isle.</p> <p>Click here for more information.</p> <p>Have a Look Around Our Website:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Home About Paul Paul's Recipes Newsletter Archives</p>

Your local garden center has now received its new seeds for the spring. So get out of the house, brave the cold and select some herb seeds to grow in your kitchen. All you need are 4 inch plastic pots, fresh potting soil and a little love. Most herbs will germinate in 7 to 14 days if kept warm after planting. I start mine on top of the refrigerator because of the heat on top and because there are no cold drafts up there to cool the soil. Once they germinate, move them to the windowsill. If your windowsill is warm, you can start them right there! I also cover the pots with Press and Seal plastic until they germinate, as this keeps the moisture and humidity in the soil. Jiffy products also makes a small windowsill greenhouse, which is a solid container to hold the soil and a clear dome to hold the moisture in. Just transplant to pots when large enough or start seeds in a Jiffy 7 pellets for easy transplanting to pots.

Growing herbs from seed will change your outlook and your relationship with the plants. The flavor you grew did not come from a bottle; it came from your enjoyment of inviting mother nature into your home this winter to grow the plants. So get out the bottle of seasoning you use most and read what it contains for herbs--then grow your own ingredients. Just use a few seeds now and save the rest for the garden in the spring. The spring seedlings can be started later on during the winter. Those seedlings can be transplanted later right into the ground during May. The seeds you plant now are for use now.

If your time is short and you want instant results, your local greenhouse may have fresh plants--or try the vegetable section of your local supermarket. All you have to remember is to water as needed and feed every 2 weeks and pick often--but take time to smell the foliage. Bon Appétit!

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I know the winter is long and cold, so let's look for a tropical plant that can excite you with unbelievable colorful foliage. The croton is such a plant--and available at most greenhouses year round. It can be purchased in 4 inch pots to 5 gallon containers that will fill a sunny window with yellow, orange and red leaves that will give you hope during those long gray days of winter.

The leaves are leathery and tough. No two leaves are alike, but all begin with a variegation of green and yellow. The colors can change to variegated and even striped. As they age, the colors begin to change to shades of orange that will blend into the yellow. In a few weeks, they change again to shades of red with the orange and yellow. There are many varieties of the croton and the foliage shape is different with each variety. Their shapes vary from long and pointed to short and broad. Newer varieties can be slender, wavy and some look like ribbon--all wavy. Most varieties' colors change with age and the older foliage has more green color. The new growth is more changeable to the yellow, orange and red.

The croton is originally from the Pacific Islands. In the South, it is a foundation plant around the home or used for low hedges growing to about 3 feet tall and just as wide. As a houseplant, it will grow just as tall and wide if repotted in the spring every other year. Use a general purpose potting soil when repotting and increase the pot size by 2 inches each time. If the plant gets too large for the window or floor, you can prune it back in the spring and the new growth will fill it in again with new colorful foliage. Then, take the cuttings from the pruning and dip them into rooting powder. Pot them in fresh potting soil and in 3 weeks the new roots will form to give you a new houseplant. Place 3 to 5 cuttings per pot to give the container a full appearance.

Crotons love the sun and the leaves will be more colorful with more sun. Less sunshine, and the colors will fade to shades of green. Keep plants at least 60 degrees during the winter and away from drafts. During the spring to fall, keep the soil moist at all times but never wet or standing in water. During the winter, less moisture is needed, so cut back on the watering but do not let soil dry up. If your house is heated with forced hot air or wood stove during the winter daily misting and placing pot on a tray of filled with stones with water added daily will be very helpful to the plant. Fertilize every 2 weeks during the spring to fall and once a month during the winter months.

Insects are few on this plant and when present are easily found on the underside of the foliage. One insect, called scale, is found on the midrib of the leaf underside. Scrape it off with your fingernail and treat the plant with horticulture oil. Mealybugs and spider mites may be a problem if the humidity around the plant is low. So keep the air humidity high to help keep the insects away from the plant.

I like to wash the foliage once a month to make the colors stand out better, and this cleaning will let you know if insects are a problem. In mid-May, put your plant outside on your deck and its colorful foliage will put to shame any container of flowers you have out there. Keep the plant outside until the kids go back to school in September. If potted plants are in a saucer, be sure to drain off extra water that may build up in it during rainy weather. If you should lose some lower leaves on the plant and it looks woody, plant a couple of English ivies in the pot and train them up the stems to fill the spaces around the stems.

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Join Paul Parent for a garden tour of the Emerald Isle! **A few seats remain!**

Tour includes the Cliffs of Moher, Connemara National Park, Brigit's Garden, Muckross Gardens,

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Bantry House & Gardens, Kilravock Garden, Garnish Island, Annes Grove Garden, Lakemount Gardens, Waterford Crystal Visitor Centre, Heywood Gardens, Powerscourt Gardens, Dublin Castle, Dillon Gardens and much more.

[Click here for details.](#)



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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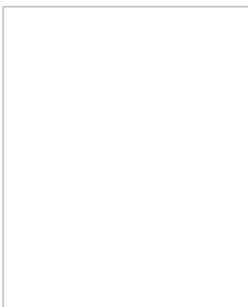


This Week's Question:

What is the state flower of New Hampshire?

[Click Here to Answer](#)

This Week's Prize: *Healthy Garden, Healthy You*, by Milo Shammass



Milo takes us through a storytelling journey of soil health, plant health, animal health and how they directly relate to human health.

BONUS: 100 easy-to-grow plants, their growing instructions, and their direct human health benefits and disease prevention properties.



Last Week's Question:

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Last Week's Winner:

Carole Stabile

Last Week's Answer:

During the Civil War, onion juice was widely used for the cleaning of gunshot wounds. Ulysses S. Grant said he would not move his troops without onions.

Last Week's Prize:

Healthy Garden, Healthy You, by Milo Shammass

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!

FEATURED RECIPE:

Shrimp and Asparagus Pasta



What You'll Need:

- 1 pound fresh asparagus
- 1 (16 ounce) package egg noodles
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil
- 1 cup butter
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 1 pound medium shrimp, peeled and deveined
- 1 pound fresh mushrooms, thinly sliced
- 1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- salt and pepper to taste

Step by Step:

- In a small saucepan, boil or steam asparagus in enough water to cover until tender; chop and set aside.
- Bring a large pot of salted water to full boil; place the pasta in the pot and return to a rolling boil. Cook until al dente. Drain well.
- In a large saucepan, sauté garlic in the olive oil over medium-low heat until the garlic is golden brown.
- Place butter and lemon juice in the saucepan. Heat until the butter has melted.
- Place the shrimp in the saucepan and cook until the shrimp turns pink.
- Place the mushrooms and asparagus in the saucepan; cook until mushrooms are tender.
- Toss the shrimp and vegetable mixture with the egg noodles and sprinkle with Parmesan cheese. Salt and pepper to taste.
- Serve immediately.

Yield: 8 servings



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