

**From:** Paul Parent Garden Club <newsletter@paulparentclub.com>  
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Edition 12.04	Paul Parent Garden Club News	January 26, 2012
 <p style="text-align: center;"><b>FEATURED QUOTE :</b> "The love of gardening is a seed once sown that never dies." ~Gertrude Jekyll</p> <div style="text-align: center; border: 1px solid black; width: 100px; height: 15px; margin: 10px auto;"></div> <p>The perfect gift for your favorite gardener on Valentine's Day! Gardens require planning and cultivation, yielding beauty and joy. This garden journal helps make planning and organizing easy, and is autographed personally by Paul! The cover holds a 5x7 or 4x6 photo and a heavy-duty D-ring binder. Includes free delivery!</p> <p><b>Also included:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 8 tabbed sections</li><li>• 5 garden details sections with pockets for seeds, tags...</li><li>• Weather records page</li><li>• 6 three year journal pages</li><li>• Insect &amp; diseases page - 3 project pages</li><li>• 3 annual checklist pages</li><li>• Plant wish list page</li><li>• 2 large pocket pages</li><li>• Sheet of garden labels</li><li>• 5 garden detail sheets</li><li>• 5 graph paper pages for layouts</li><li>• 5 photo pages, each holding four 4x6 photos in landscape or portrait format</li></ul> <p>Order early to insure delivery and have Paul sign it for you. Half the price of a dozen red roses--and it lasts for three years! <a href="#">Click here to order online.</a></p> <div style="text-align: center; border: 1px solid black; width: 150px; height: 15px; margin: 10px auto;"></div> <p>Every spring brings us excitement for our gardens, with new flowers, vegetables, trees, shrubs, and gardening products--and this year is no exception. If you love perennials as I do, you know that the only disease-tolerant tall-growing phlox is called 'David'...and it's white. It flowers during late June for about 4 weeks and then show is over--but it's beautiful and disease-tolerant.</p> <p>This year, for all of you who love tall-growing phlox, there is finally something new for your garden--and you will be excited to add these plants in your flower garden. This remarkable series of perennial tall-growing phlox is called the "Volcano Series" and they are more compact-growing than any other variety on the market today. These new plants are very sturdy, exceptionally floriferous and--yes--extremely tolerant of the powdery mildew that plagues and defoliates many other tall phlox varieties. Now, if that is not enough...it is also the only tall phlox series of plants that will re-flower when you cut them back after the initial bloom.</p> <p>These new plants owe their existence to the end of the cold war. When the wall fell in Berlin Germany, members of a Dutch hybridizing firm called Bartels Stek entered the newly opened</p>		<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Gifts for the Gardener</b></p> <p><a href="#">Here are some great ideas for gifts your favorite gardener will just love!</a></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Contact Information:</b></p> <p><b>E-Mail:</b> <a href="#">Click to contact us.</a></p> <p><b>Telephone:</b> (207) 985-6972 (800) 259-9231 (Sunday 6 AM to 10 AM)</p> <p><b>Fax:</b> (207) 985-6972</p> <p><b>Address:</b> Paul Parent Garden Club 2 Blueberry Pines Dr Kennebunk, ME 04043</p> <p><b>Regular Phone Hours:</b> Mon.-Sat. 8 AM to 6 PM Sunday: 10 AM to 6 PM</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Tell your friends about Paul! Send them a copy of Paul's latest newsletter.</b></p> <p>(Note: this will not subscribe them to the newsletter, nor retain their email - it will just send them a copy from you.)</p> <p>Your e-mail [    ]</p> <p>Your name [    ]</p> <p>Their e-mail [    ]</p> <p>Their name [    ]</p> <p style="text-align: center;">[Send &gt;&gt;]</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Where can I find Paul on</b></p>

countries in search of new plants all through Eastern Europe. Their most exciting find was a tall phlox, a North American native but a variety lost to the west during the wars in Europe. The plants were not fragrant or very floriferous but they were very tolerant to powdery mildew disease. The plants were brought back to Holland, where plant breeders crossbred them to develop this exciting new "Volcano" series of plants.

This crossbreeding gave this new plant series fragrance, abundant flowers, larger flowers, and the ability to grow more compact. It also gave the plants the ability to flower again once the original flower faded and the plants were cut back--something tall phlox could never do before. With all these positive new traits, the best thing about this series is still its natural disease tolerance. The plant breeders said that this disease resistance is so high that it exceeded all their own previously heralded introductions.

The Volcano Series are also prized for their dense upright growth and multi-branching form. By the second year in your garden, expect your plants to produce 15 to 30 sturdy stems per plant, more than any other variety of tall phlox on the market today. These sturdy stems will produce large flower clusters with as many as 125 individual flowers per cluster and more. Each flower is one inch in diameter, and the flower cluster itself can grow to be 8 to 10 inches tall and just as wide, while keeping the traditional cone shaped cluster.

Most tall phlox will flower for 3 to 4 weeks during mid to late June to July. Because this plant has the ability to re-bloom, it will flower until October if you cut back the flower stems as they fade in your garden. Also, unlike most other types of tall phlox, these plants will never require staking--another big plus for us as gardeners--making them easier to care for and low maintenance.

The foliage is deep green, lance shaped with a point on the tip of the leaf and grows to be up to 5 inches long and 1 to 2 inches wide. The leaves will grow to be slightly cupped and are shiny in appearance, covering the stems from the ground right up to the top of the flower cluster.

Garden phlox are one of the backbones of a summer perennial garden when they are in bloom. They love a sunny exposure but will tolerate a bit of early morning or late in the day shade. The flowers are a bit trumpet-like and are loved for their nectar by butterflies and hummingbirds. Also unique about these plants is the ability to stay fragrant all the time while in flower--even the second and third sets of flowers in October will be fragrant. The plants are very hardy to zone 4, with winter temperatures down to minus 20 to 30 degrees.

These plants love warm days and cool nights--like the climate of northern New England where some perennials do not do very well. Plant the Volcano phlox in a soil that is well drained and where water never stands--especially during the winter months. It's best to avoid low spots in your yard. Clay soils are also a problem when growing tall phlox, as they are slow to drain and can become waterlogged. When you plant, condition the soil with compost, animal manure, or good organic matter like peat moss or seaweed.

Your soil should be fertile and not acidic, so be sure to lime regularly if your yard has visible moss growing in the lawn or the garden is near oaks, pines or maple trees. Sprinkle the lime around your plants the same way you apply rock salt to an icy walkway. If your soil is on the sandy side, add Soil Moist granules at the time of planting or poke 3 to 5 holes with a crow bar around the drip line of the plant 6 inches deep and divide 2 teaspoons of product in them to help hold water around the roots during the hot and dry days of summer.

Volcano phlox come in 4 colors right now, but new colors are in the works. Look for pink with a white eye, purple with a white eye, pink with a red eye and pure white. During April, use a slow release organic fertilizer like Flower Tone or Dr. Earth Flower food with Pro-biotic. When the plant is in flower, it loves to be fed and it will help to produce more flowers on the plant. When you cut back the stems as the flowers as they fade, fertilize again to help encourage many more flower stems and flower clusters. Three to four feedings per year will keep your plant in bloom right up until frost, April, July and September.

Water your plants when possible at the base of the plant with a soil soaker nozzle or use a soil soaker hose. Avoid watering at night, as wet foliage will encourage disease problems. Never plant any type of phlox where overhead in-ground sprinkler systems are installed, as frequent watering is not needed. When planting space plants 24 to 30 inches apart to provide good air circulation around the plants.

Remember, no pinching or pruning is necessary in your garden. Just cut back the stems by 1/3 or deadhead as the flowers go by to encourage additional blooming throughout the season. This is a wonderful plant if you like tall phlox for summer color. For me, it's a must-have plant and also a good cut flower for tall flowers arrangements. Enjoy.

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When we think dogwood, most of us think of the wonderful pink- or white-flowering tree of the spring time, or the summer flowering kousa dogwood ((*Cornus kousa*) --but did you know there is a winter flowering dogwood that will make your heart beat faster? Yes, this dogwood is one that will bloom during March when almost everything else is still dormant and you want a sign that winter is coming to an end soon...and I mean real soon. March is just a few short weeks away now so let me tell you about this wonderful flowering shrub of winter.

The Cornelian Cherry dogwood is the most durable and hardy of all the dogwood family. It is not seen very often in gardens, because it flowers so early that most nurseries do not have it in stock yet and it is hard to sell a plant when it finishes flowering. When you see the many clusters of bright yellow flowers on the plant, even when the ground is covered with snow, you will be

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impressed. Just think of this: it's March, it's cold, the ground still has a bit of snow on it and the sky is bright blue--but in your garden you have a shrub that is covered with small 1 to 2 inch clusters of bright yellow flowers; your neighbors have nothing that looks alive yet.

This plant will grow in a climate with winter temperatures of minus 20 to 30 degrees, making it the strongest of all dogwood plants--and it will live longer than any other of the dogwood plants. Each flower cluster will have 10 to 15 small 1/2 inch flowers that resemble fireworks in the night sky. They look soft and delicate but are indestructible in the cold weather of March. The flowers appear on the plant before the leaves develop in early May, and those wonderful flowers will last on the plant for 4 to 6 weeks. Even a late season snow storm will not hurt those wonderful flowers. Yes, they are weatherproof--and if you get up close to the plant they do have a slight scent to them.

The plant is a multi-stemmed shrub that will grow up to 20 feet tall if you do not prune it, but with yearly prunings, it will stay at 10 to 12 feet tall and 15 to 20 feet wide. The plant will grow more upright than spreading and has an oval to rounded appearance if used as a specimen plant in your yard. If you plant it near evergreen trees like Canadian hemlock or white pine for a background, you will be in for a real treat when it is in flower.

The plant also makes a wonderful hedge for privacy or blocking the view of the neighbor's back yard during the summer months--or even lessening road noise and hiding traffic. This is possible because the plant does grow so thick and the branches are strong and able to hold heavy snow loads. The bark is dark gray and rough looking as it ages; when young it is smooth and has no shine to it.

The leaves are 2 to 4 inches long and dark green until the fall weather arrives, turning them to purple red with a bit of yellow tinge. These leaves resemble all dogwood leaves, with sunken veins on the oval shaped leaf that have a pointed tip. The leaf of the Cornelian Cherry dogwood is also shiny and seldom has a problem with disease or insects.

Now you might be saying, "Why it is called a Cherry dogwood if the flowers are yellow?" But I have not yet told you about the fruit this wonderful plant makes during June and July. The cherry-like fruit the plant makes is a bit larger than 1/2 inch in diameter, and develops in clusters on the plant where the flowers were during March. These wonderful fruits will turn bright cherry-red when ripe, and the birds will go crazy for them. If you time it well, you can pick them and use them to make great preserves or jams--even sweet syrup for deserts. I will tell you that the birds will know a day before you do when they are ripe and often will strip the plant in just a few days, so net the plant like you do blueberries to save the fruit for yourself.

The wonderful shrub-type dogwood will grow in most soils--even heavy clay-like soil. In a well-drained rich soil with lots of organic matter it becomes a work of art for your garden with its many qualities. Always condition the soil with animal manure, compost, or organic matter like peat moss or seaweed when planting. In a sandy soil, the plant will not grow as fast, flower as much or bear as many fruits during the summer months, so be sure to add top soil when planting and soil conditioners. Also use Soil Moist granules when planting to help keep the roots moist during the first year in the ground.

The plant will also do best in full sun and grow to become a large shrub or, when pruned, a small tree. If you are going to prune to control the size of the plant or create a special shape, prune the plant in the early spring when it finishes flowering--but before the leaves begin to develop on the plant. If you have a plant in your yard now, go out and cut a few branches 2 to 4 feet long and bring them inside the house for forcing in a tall vase of warm water. In just 2 weeks, the flower show will begin and last for 2 to 3 weeks, but the flowers will not have much of a smell to them--as with most plants that are forced.

The plant will grow in acid or alkaline soil, so don't worry about adding limestone to the soil to keep it growing well. Fertilize in the spring when it has finished flowering, usually during May, to help encourage new growth and make more fruit on the plant. Feeding in June will encourage the plant to also make more flower buds for next year on the plant.

This plant will also tolerate a windy location and will do well near the seashore as long as the soil is well conditioned before planting. As with all shrubs, a nice thick layer of bark mulch 2 to 3 inches deep will help the plant do better during dry hot periods and help prevent root problems in cold climates.

If you have seen this plant and like it, look for the hybrids with yellow foliage called 'Aurea' (yellow), or 'Tricolor,' with variegated yellow foliage tinged with a pink margins. Both are not as hardy, but in a sheltered area will do very well. The best of the golden foliage plants is 'Golden Glory.' It has larger flowers, larger bright red fruit, and grows faster in the garden, making for a wonderful winter show in your yard.

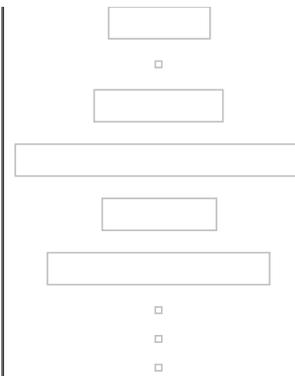
This dogwood is native to Japan and Europe like the other varieties of dogwood (but, again, much hardier), so if you live in a cold climate like central Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont or even upper New York State, this is the plant for you.

This dogwood will flower every year no matter what the winter weather is like --nlike the others that fail to bloom if the winter is cold and windy! If you think you would like this plant, visit your local nursery or garden center in the next few weeks and order one so they can get one for you with their spring order of shrubs and trees. Look for the flowers in just 5 weeks. Enjoy!

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It is believed that parsley originated in Lebanon and Sardinia, where the Romans found it and



introduced it around the world. Ancient Romans used this plant to conceal the smell of alcohol and ancient lore tells of kindly bartenders who would give their patrons a sprig of parsley to hide their drinking. The old saying was, "Try a bit of parsley before you go home and she'll never know you've had a drink." Next time you're at a party be sure to bring some parsley with you to chew on before you head home for the evening. It's not that effective for covering alcohol, but it does make a wonderful breath freshener for the goodnight kiss.

The Greeks also associated parsley with death and it was used in burial rites. Some say it was used to mask the odor of the deceased, as it made a potent deodorizer when crushed and placed into the casket. Another Greek legend tells that parsley sprang up where the blood of the Greek hero Archemorus had fallen during battle.

Parsley was also used in the wreath to place on the head of triumphant athlete during major sporting events or after great accomplishments. It is told that even Hercules picked parsley to make a garland for his own head before battle. Parsley was not eaten by the athletes; it was given to their horses for good luck. The main uses of parsley were as a decorative garland on the banquet tables, to discourage intoxication and to counter strong odors during the celebration.

During the days of yore it was believed that only witches or women who were pregnant could grow this plant from seed. Some said that only where the "mistress was the master" of the house would it grow--and if the plant was moved in the garden it would cause misfortune to fall on the house. It could also only be grown by the wicked or by just the opposite--an honest person. One last thing...it was also believed that the best harvest was on plants started by seed planted on Good Friday.

Now, there are two types of parsley grown in the garden, flat leaf and curly leaf. If you're looking for the plant with the best flavor and stronger taste grow the flat leaf, as the leaves and stems have stronger oils for more flavor. The curly leaf type has a much milder taste, is best used as a garnish, and the foliage is much better looking when decorating the table or dishes you have worked so hard to cook. Just remember presentation--yes presentation--makes the meal.

Growing parsley will require that you have a rich and fertile soil. Your soil should be moist and well drained at all times or the roots will rot with the standing water. Parsley is an annual herb plant for most of us, but it will often redevelop the following year from seeds ejected from the flower seed pods. The plant will develop more foliage if you condition the soil before planting with compost or animal manure and fertilize frequently during the growing season with a liquid fertilizer such as Miracle-Gro or Blooming and Rooting plant food.

Select a location in your yard with sun most of the day but it will do quite well in partial shade but not produce as much foliage and the plant will tend to grow taller due to the shade. If you are starting from seed, it is best to wait until the ground has had a chance to warm up after a cold spring. Plant parsley seeds in May or June when the soil has warmed up and the threat of frost has passed. If you plant while the ground is cold and the air temperature is also cool, your seeds will germinate slowly, and germinate erratically.

If you want an early crop, start indoors in pots and transplant to the garden later. Also because the seed is slow to germinate it is important that you keep the garden soil moist at all times or the seed will not germinate. I like to plant extra seeds and transplant or thin the seedlings once they develop and grow to one inch tall. Plant seedlings in a clump of 3 to 5 plants and space these clumps 6 to 10 inches apart in the garden. To help the seed to germinate faster, soak the seeds in a glass of warm water overnight before planting in the garden.

The flat leaf parsley will grow 18 to 24 inches tall and just as wide. It also has small creamy white flowers during the summer and they should be removed to keep the energy in the plant and foliage developing all year long. Parsley is a very hungry plant and should be fertilized often when you are harvesting foliage to cook with regularly, every other week. The curly leaf parsley will grow shorter--12 to 16 inches tall and just as wide. It also has small creamy white flowers that should be removed from the plant as they develop to keep the plant productive.

When the weather get warm and dry, be sure to water the plants often and keep the fertilizer coming on a regular basis so plant can stay healthy. Also keep the weeds away from the plants for the best growth. Lack of moisture or dry growing conditions will cause the plant to have lighter colored foliage, less flavor and encourage spotting on the foliage with disease problems due to plant stress. Parsley plant will grow best in a soil that is not acidic so adding limestone or lime substitutes every spring will help the plant to grow better in soils that tend to be acid.

If yellow foliage develops on the plant, remove it at once as it will never green up again even with added fertilizer. One year when I returned from a weeks' vacation I noticed that the plants were all stressed out by the lack of rain and hot temperatures that week. I cut back the plant and removed 75% of the older foliage and fertilized the plants. In just over two weeks the plant had made much new growth with dark green foliage and was productive again.

Parsley is rich in vitamin C, also high in Iron and other minerals. A good herbal book I read said it will help in the production of mother's milk for nursing mothers. If you're planning to save the foliage for later use pick when young and firm. Use the newer foliage along with the stem and freeze it in a freezer bag. Dried foliage will have less flavor and as it dries in storage and ages, the foliage will have even less taste when used for cooking.

If you want to grow parsley in containers inside during the winter months choose a south facing window. Plants will grow best in containers 6 inches in diameter, as parsley has a large root system and requires much water during the sunny days of winter. Also feed the plants every other week.

When you eat meals or salads with onions and garlic pinch a leaf and chew it up before you go out and talk to your dinner guest, it's better than breath mints--and just as flavorful. Enjoy!

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Susan Hill's sculpture 'The Giant's Head' in the Lost Gardens of Heligan

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Trivia will be returning soon.

### FEATURED RECIPE:

#### Cream Cheese Potato Soup



#### **What You'll Need:**

- 4 cups chicken broth
- 4 cups potatoes, peeled and cubed
- 1/4 cup onions, minced
- 1/2 teaspoon seasoning salt
- 1/4 teaspoon white pepper
- 1/4 teaspoon ground red pepper
- 1 (8 ounce) package cream cheese, cut into chunks

#### **Step by Step:**

- Combine broth, potatoes, onion, and spices.
- Boil on medium heat until potatoes are tender.
- Smash a few of the potato cubes to release their starch for thickening.
- Reduce to low heat.
- Add cream cheese.

- Heat, stirring frequently, until cheese melts.

Yield: 4-6 servings



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