

From: Paul Parent Garden Club <newsletter@paulparentclub.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 28, 2011 2:07 PM
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Subject: Paul Parent Garden Club News - April 28, 2011

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Edition 11.17	Paul Parent Garden Club News	April 28, 2011
	<p style="text-align: center;">FEATURED QUOTE :</p> <p>In the spring I have counted one hundred and thirty-six different kinds of weather inside of four and twenty hours. -Mark Twain</p> <div style="text-align: center; border: 1px solid black; width: 100px; height: 15px; margin: 0 auto 20px auto;"></div> <p style="text-align: center;">Greenclean® Granular Algaecide by BioSafe Systems</p> <p>GreenClean Granular works through oxidation, breaking down algae cells on contact. Its organic chemistry immediately begins fighting algae blooms, releasing vital oxygen into the water body as it biodegrades. GreenClean Granular is ideal for algae growing on waterfalls and all types of water.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Controls string algae in ponds and on waterfalls• Breaks down into water and oxygen• Can be used all season as a preventative treatment• Works on contact• Eco-friendly chemistry and OMRI listed <p>For more details on Biosafe System's products, please visit their website.</p> <div style="text-align: center; border: 1px solid black; width: 100px; height: 15px; margin: 0 auto 20px auto;"></div> <p>From Maine to Minnesota and south to Georgia, there is no more exciting tree than the flowering star magnolia in the springtime. As April approaches, the tree begins to open its flower buds, which resemble pure white eggs that burst into pure white star-like flowers, quickly covering the tree branches.</p> <p>On a bright full moon evening look at your tree for a real treat, as those flowers will glow in the moonlight and light up your garden with color. Next fall, plant white-flowering daffodils in the garden around the base of the tree and you will be in for a very special treat. White reflects the moonlight and your garden will amaze you--try it.</p> <p>The star magnolia is the first flowering tree of spring time and it will show you that warm weather is not far behind, so get ready for spring. This type of magnolia will grow as large as a flowering crabapple, from 15 to 20 feet tall and just as wide--but if placed in a sheltered area with evergreen trees protecting it from the winds it can and will grow larger. The star magnolia can be grown as a single trunk small tree or multi stem shrub-like tree; it will depend on the shape of the plant you select at the nursery.</p> <p>If you want more of a tree shape, select a plant at the nursery with just one main trunk and remove all the other smaller branches that develop at the base of the plant. Your pruning techniques will shape the future growing habit of the plant and determine its overall shape. If you allow the side branches or the shoots that will form the base of the plant to form, the plant will stay shorter and spread out more like a large shrub does. If you prune out the side shoots and lower branches, the plant will grow taller, stay more narrow and spread out less, resembling a tree more--it's up to you.</p> <p>The bark of the plant is smooth, gray, and very clean looking. The branches have many small side shoots that will form; these side shoots will all make flowers in the spring. The flowers look like giant daisies when in bloom and each flower can have 25 or more white petals that grow 2 to 3 inches long and 3/4 to 1 inch wide. The star magnolia flowers will last 2 to 3 weeks, sometimes longer if the weather is not too severe and warm as the flowers begin to fade. Because the flower petals are long and narrow, the wind seems to flow through them easily.</p> <p>The saucer magnolia, a wonderful sister to this plant, has much larger flower petals and if the</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Gifts for the Gardener</p> <p>Here are some great ideas for gifts your favorite gardener will just love!</p> <p style="text-align: center;">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: Mon.-Sat. 8 AM to 6 PM Sunday: 10 AM to 6 PM</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Where can I find Paul on Sunday mornings?</p> <p>Click here to find Paul Parent Garden Club™ radio stations.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Have a Look Around Our Website:</p> <div style="text-align: center;"></div> <p style="text-align: center;">Subscribe to our newsletter!</p> <p>Click here to subscribe, unsubscribe or change your address.</p> <div style="text-align: center; border: 1px solid black; width: 100px; height: 15px; margin: 0 auto 20px auto;"></div>

weather gets stormy will blow apart easily, causing the base of the tree to look as if a box of Kleenex exploded under it. So if your yard is in an exposed area with lots of wind, plant the star magnolia, **not** the saucer magnolia and you will enjoy the flowers longer in your garden.

What also makes the flowers last longer on the tree is that the flower buds do not all open at the same time, happening over a week or two in April. At this time of the year, the weather is cooler and this also helps to keep the flowers blooming longer. The flowers have a mild fragrance when the days are warm and the weather is dry. If you have a branch that is growing out of shape, prune it off while it's in bloom and place it in a tall vase of water to enjoy on the kitchen table for a couple of weeks.

The leaves are dark green, oval in shape, growing from 4 to 6 inches long and 2 to 3 inches wide. Some years the leaves will develop on the tree at the same time as the flowers are in bloom. In the fall, if the wind and insects did their job properly, a pod will form where the flowers were on the plant. The pod is cone-shaped, with swollen bumps along its side that contain small red seeds. The pod is gray, and it will burst open and reveal its seeds when the weather gets cold in the fall, as the leaves drop to the ground from the tree. Birds and small animals like chipmunks will eat the seed during the winter, or you can pick them and store them in your vegetable crisper for the winter and plant them in the spring time.

Magnolias will grow in full sun or half a day in the shade. They will grow much better if there is moisture available to them all year long. If your soil is sandy, be sure to add lots of organic matter like compost, animal manure or peat moss when planting. To help get your magnolia off to a good start, add 2 to 3 tablespoons of Soil Moist granules to help hold moisture around the new roots that form. I have had great results also adding kelp seaweed and mycorrhizae at the time of planting to help the roots to develop more quickly.

Always plant magnolias in a planting bed and cover the soil with bark mulch to help hold moisture around the roots of the plant and keep out weeds. Planting beds also help prevent damage to the trunk of the plant from your lawn mower and weed whacker. The bark is smooth and thin; it will not tolerate bruising from your garden equipment. The planting bed also gives you room to plant spring flowering bulbs like white daffodils for your moonlight garden in the spring and annuals for summer color.

I have always noticed that flowering plants that have flowers planted under or near them always flower better in the spring. This is because you are feeding the flowers during the summer, and your flowering trees get some of the food you're giving your flowers. This feeding will help produce more energy for your plants and make flowers for next year on your trees.

Keep the plant well watered the first year in your garden; if the plant is taller than 5 to 6 feet, I would stake it in the fall to help keep the winter winds from blowing it around during the winter and damaging the new roots. If you're planting the tree in an area where there are tall grasses or a wooded area close by, be sure to wrap the trunk of the tree a couple of feet high with tree wrap the first winter to prevent mouse damage.

If the winter is one with lots of snow and the snow lasts into early April, don't be surprised if squirrels eat the flower buds before they have a chance to open; it does not happen often but it does happen. They also like rhododendron flower buds so if you see those disappearing, use an animal repellent on them quickly.

Plant the star magnolia as a single tree, or plant several in a row to create a wonderful tall-growing privacy hedge on your property; they also make a good noise barrier to buffer road noise and quiet the traffic. If the side of your house has a large blank wall between windows, a tall fence, or evergreens as a background, the star magnolia will soften the area during all seasons of the year. This is also a great plant to place a spotlight under to highlight the unique branches and flowers.

The star magnolia is a tree that will give your garden the look and feel of the South in the cold of the Northeast. All you need is a mint julep and a rocking chair near the tree to enjoy the arrival of spring!

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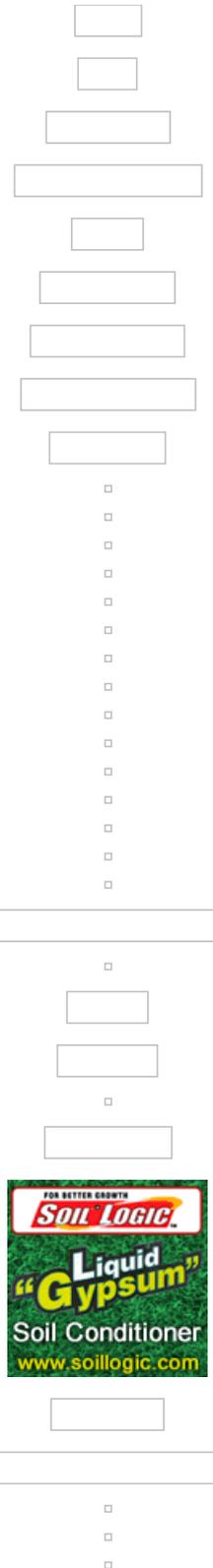
Even if you're not a gardener, you know the forsythia flowering shrub because of its wonderful golden yellow waxy flowers at this time of the year; it's our first and most beautiful plant of spring time. Each flower has 4 petals and the center looks like a tiny trumpet, 1 to 1.5 inches long and wide.

Some people do not know the name of the plant but they know that it's beautiful and they want "One of those yellow shrubs that are in bloom right now, for my yard." Forsythia is so popular because it will grow in most soil types, it will grow in a yard with full sun exposure to half a day of shade, and it will tolerate a climate where the temperature drops to minus 10 degrees during the winter.

I think forsythia is the most recognized flowering shrub because it is the first to flower in the spring time and because the entire plant is covered with flowers from the ground to the top of every branch. Most flowering plants flower on the tip of the branches, on the new growth on top of the plant or along the stems but few plants flower right to the ground.

At this time of the year when we have had cold, cloudy, and wet weather for many weeks, the golden yellow flowers are like the sunshine we miss most during the winter. Forsythia is a plant that will grow in everyone yard, no matter how much or how little you know about gardening.

Let me tell you how forsythia will grow better for you in your yard. This plant will grow large, so give



it plenty of room when you choose a spot in your yard. If you do not prune your plant, it can grow 8 to 10 feet tall and just as wide. If you want to keep the plant smaller and under control you will have to prune it every spring when it finishes flowering.

The pruning is best done by cutting back the individual branches by 1/3 to 1/2, or removing the largest branches to stimulate new growth from the base of the plant. This pruning must be done before the new foliage begins to form on the plant, so all the energy in the plant can encourage new growth uniformly throughout the plant. What makes this plant look so nice in the spring is that all the branches are tangled, growing in all directions, and--if pruned properly--the plant will grow in a rounded spreading mound with branches that grow upright or cascade to the ground.

I prune my plants when half of the flowers have fallen and like me, you should NEVER use hedge shears when pruning. Hedge shears shape the plant to grow too rounded--sometimes like a ball-shaped shrub because you are pruning all the branches the same length. Prune each branch separately and at different lengths to keep the plant looking graceful and more natural. Pruning in the early spring encourages new growth to thicken the plant and encourages more flower buds to form on the plant for next spring.

When you plant, condition the soil with compost, animal manure, or peat moss to encourage the plant to get established quickly in your garden. I encourage you to add kelp or mycorrhizae at the same time for better root development. You should water the plant every other day the first month and weekly right up to frost the first year. In the fall (early September), fertilize with Plant Tone or Dr. Earth Shrub fertilizer with pro-biotic to prepare it for the winter.

You will notice that the branches of the forsythia plant are covered with small raised bumps. These bumps are like spots of a cork-like material very similar to the raised edge, or wing-like growths of the burning bush, and are very noticeable when the leaves are off the plant. When the new growth first forms, the bark will be golden yellow in color; it matures to gray. The flower buds develop around the stems in clusters facing in all directions, and when they are open cover the entire plant.

The foliage is medium green, oval, 2 to 4 inches long and 1 to 1 1/2 inch wide, with tiny teeth along the edge of the leaf. In the fall, the foliage will change to a bright purple-red color if the plant is in the sun all day. Plants in partial shade will not change color; the foliage falls from the plant when still green.

Forsythia makes a wonderful plant for a privacy hedge and will grow very well along the side of the road where salt can be a problem for most other plants. Use it in mass plantings to bring color into your yard, as individual plants in your foundation planting, or as a background plant behind your perennial gardens.

Forsythia has few to no problems with insects or disease, and aside from spring pruning requires little to no attention from you during the year. Because it does grow so thick but looks open and airy, the plant will make a great place for nesting birds to make nests once the foliage develops. The stems are very strong and when the foliage falls from the plant, snow can easily fall through the branches of the plant, causing little to no damage during the winter.

There are some varieties that are more weeping than upright growing. These are wonderful when planted on top of a wall or on the side of a hill, allowing branches to hang down to the ground or over the wall; look for forsythia *suspensa* v. *sieboldii*.

If the tall growing varieties are too tall for you and you like the yellow flowers in the spring, look for the new dwarf types like forsythia 'Bronxensis,' which grows one foot tall and will spread to 3 feet wide. This plant will make a great ground cover or low growing hedge.

Also for a bit more height, look for forsythia 'Arnold,' a dwarf which will grow 3 feet tall and wide. This plant has wide arching branches, and when the branches contact the soil, they will root easily. Just dig up the rooted branch and you will have a new plant for your garden. This forsythia is wonderful for planting on slopes or banks.

The most popular tall growing varieties are 'Lynwood Gold,' 'Spring Glory' and 'Robusta.' Look for them this spring at your favorite nursery or garden center. One last thing to remember about the forsythia is that this plant can be pruned from January to April. The branches you cut can be brought into the house, placed in a tall vase of water and the buds will burst open, giving you a peek at what spring will look like in just a few weeks. Enjoy!!!

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Number One:

Crabgrass control is best when done in the early spring with a Pre-Emergence crabgrass preventer, sometimes known as Step-1. This is the most effective way to prevent crabgrass, by killing the seed in your lawn before it has a chance to germinate. This granular product must be applied on your lawn and watered in to dissolve the product and change it to a liquid before the seed begins to germinate. The liquid will move on the soil surface and create a skin-like barrier to kill and prevent germination. This product also has a full feeding of fertilizer to green up your lawn, to thicken existing grass so it can fill in the exposed soil with grass and prevent other grassy weeds from developing in that area.

Crabgrass preventers come in two types. The first type is to be used if you're not going to add fresh grass seed to the lawn at this time--this is the least expensive product available. This product is available in the traditional way--a chemical that is very safe for your family and does a great job. Also available is the organic method--you would use corn gluten as the seed germinating preventer. Corn gluten is also a fertilizer and will do a great job, but like most organic weed control

products will be more expensive, and it has to be done both in the spring and in the fall for the best results. When you use corn gluten, you cannot plant fresh grass seed, as it will kill the grass seed along with the weed seeds that find their way into your lawn.

The second method is more expensive but it will allow you to plant grass seed at the same time you kill off the crabgrass seeds. This is a great product, especially if you're planting a new lawn at this time of the year and you had crabgrass in the past. If your lawn is thin, if you had Japanese beetle damage to the lawn or you're renovating, this is the best product to plant fresh grass seed with. This is what is known in the gardening industry as a "Smart Weed Preventer." It will kill only crabgrass seeds and not hurt the new grass seed--well worth the extra money if you have had problems in the past.

All three of these products MUST be applied before the forsythia begins to drop its flowers, and your forsythia is in full bloom right now, so time to use these products is limited. If you're going to apply these products, do not rely on rainfall; use your sprinkler and wash the product into the soil now.

Number Two:

Transplanting is best done when the plants are still dormant. Due to the cold and wet weather this spring you still have time to move roses, shrubs, trees, perennials and ornamental grasses but you need to get moving and get it done real soon. Roses should be cut back by about 1/3 before moving to a new location; even climbing types need to be pruned back to help balance the root to plant ratio.

Wild beach roses can be dug from the beach at this time --do not worry, there is no root ball when you dig them. I have in the past just loosened the soil around them and pulled them out bare-root with great success. Just be sure to plant in the new location with lots of compost, animal manure or a new product called "Sweet Peat," a wonderful soil conditioner that is perfect for this.

Shrubs need to be moved before the flowers begin to open and before the foliage develops. If you move them while they are still dormant there is less stress on these plants and your flowering time will be normal. If you try to move the plant when it is in bloom, your flowering period will be greatly shortened or the flower buds will fall from the plant and you will lose the flower for this year. If you move the plant when the plant is making the new growth for this year, the plant will wilt and be under stress, slowing down the recovery period because of the move to a new garden.

When you move a plant before the new growth forms, the plant can better adapt to the move. It will produce less new growth to compensate for the loss of roots you were not able to recover when you dug the plant. Do it now! Water often, condition the soil, and if the plant is a non-flowering type, cut the plant back by 10 to 20 percent to help balance the root loss.

If your soil is sandy, be sure to use Soil Moist granules to help hold moisture around the root ball you dug. I would also recommend that you use a product that has mycorrhizae in it, to help encourage new root development quickly.

If you're moving trees, be sure to stake them if they are taller than six feet to prevent the wind from blowing them around. If the top of the plant moves a lot, the small roots that are developing in the ground will break with all this movement. Trees must also be moved before the foliage forms for the best results.

If you're moving plants from the wild, like birches, maples, oaks or are moving trees you planted a few years ago and have decided that the place they are in now is not the best spot for them, do it now! Condition the soil, keep wet, feed weekly with a liquid fertilizer like Fertilome Blooming and Rooting Soluble Plant Food to help form roots quickly and also use mycorrhizae.

Perennials can be moved and divided if they are small--under 3 to 4 inches tall right now. If they are taller, you can move them with little to no problem but I would not divide them at this time. Dig up the plant from the garden and--if at all possible--try to pull it apart rather than splitting it with a knife or garden spade.

With some very fleshy perennials like daylilies or hostas, you will have to use a knife to divide, but try to pull them apart first. Peonies, irises and rose mallows will have to be cut with garden spade and/or a knife, as the root system is very woody. These plants **must be done now**, before the new growth begins to develop, or you will lose the flowers this year.

Ornamental grasses should be cut back to 6 to 12 inches from the ground **now**, as the new growth will soon be developing at the base of the dead-looking grass clump. Use hedge shears or even a saw on the dead foliage from the clump. If you want to divide the plant, now is also the time. Just dig up the entire clump and lay it down on the ground.

To divide ornamental grass you will need to use a garden spade or hatchet, as the roots are very thick and tangled together. Lay the plant on its side and cut in two pieces. If the plant is very large, you can cut each piece in two pieces again, making you the proud garden owner of 4 plants. Plant with soil conditioners, use mycorrhizae and Blooming and Rooting liquid fertilizer every week for 6 weeks; if your soils are sandy, add Soil Moist granules.

You can also split hydrangeas at this time of the year; just follow the same directions as the ornamental grasses to divide. Cut back the plants to two feet tall to limit foliage production and the plants will adapt much faster. You will lose some flowers for this year but you now have 2 to 4 new plants in your garden. Hydrangeas will need mycorrhizae, and Soil Moist when dividing. Look for Plant Thrive from Alpha-Bio-Systems or Nature's Solution for pure mycorrhizae at your local garden center.

When the weather gets warm--and it will--these gardening jobs must be already done or your plants will suffer or possibly not survive the move. Do it now and get it done while the weather is in your favor so you can enjoy the mild weather ahead!!!

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Looking for a great gift for Mother's Day? 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:

If you were in England and had aubergine on the dinner plate, what would you be eating?

[**Click Here to Answer**](#)

This Week's Prize:

Espoma Organic Seed Starter Mix



- Contains Myco-tone® mycorrhizae
- For all seedlings and cuttings.
- Promotes Root Growth.
- In 8 and 16 qt. bags.

Last Week's Question

Even though it's an old song, many of us know the tune and the words..."In your Easter bonnet, with all the frills upon it, you'll be the grandest lady in the Easter parade." Who wrote the song?

Last Week's Winner:

Ted Choinski

Last Week's Answer:

Irving Berlin

Last Week's Prize:

Espoma Organic Seed Starter Mix

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:

Chicken Mole Tortilla Casserole



What You'll Need:

- 1 (10-ounce) can chicken broth
- 1/2 cup raisins
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 onion, chopped
- 3 cloves garlic, chopped
- 2 tablespoons chili powder
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon cayenne pepper (adjust more or less to taste)
- 1 red bell pepper, chopped
- 1 10-12 oz. can diced tomatoes, drained
- 2 tablespoons peanut butter
- 3 ounces chopped bittersweet chocolate
- 1/3 cup vegetable oil (or to 1/4 inch in skillet)
- 9 corn tortillas
- 3 3/4 cups shredded jack cheese
- 3 cups cooked chicken
- white or Spanish rice
- slivered almonds

Step by Step:

- Preheat oven to 350°.
- Place 2/3 cup chicken broth in a large microwavable measuring cup, and heat until simmering, about 2 minutes; add raisins to broth to soften.
- In a large skillet, heat oil over medium-high heat; add onion and sauté until translucent.
- Turn heat to medium; add garlic, chili powder, cumin, cinnamon and cayenne, stirring for 30-60 seconds or until spices begin to toast.
- Add chopped red pepper and softened raisins and stir for 1-2 minutes, until pepper is soft and flavors have begun to fully meld.
- Add canned tomatoes, chicken broth and peanut butter; add chopped chocolate and stir until combined. Turn heat down to low so chocolate does not burn.
- Simmer for 10 minutes, stirring constantly, careful not to burn chocolate. Remove from heat and cool slightly, about 5 minutes.
- Place into blender and purée until smooth; set aside, covered. (Can be frozen at this point for later use.)
- Wipe skillet clean. Pour vegetable oil into skillet, to a depth of about 1/4 inch, heating over medium-high heat.
- Fry tortillas, one at a time, just a few seconds on each side. Transfer tortillas to paper towels to drain.
- Butter or nonstick spray a shallow, 2-quart casserole dish; place 3 prepared tortillas, overlapping as necessary, along the bottom of the dish.
- Layer 1 cup of chicken atop tortillas; ladle about 1/4 of the sauce onto the chicken.
- Add about 1 cup shredded cheese and top with 3 more tortillas.
- Layer 1 cup chicken, 1/4 of the sauce and 1 cup shredded cheese.
- Top with remaining tortillas, chicken, mole sauce and cheese.
- Cover casserole with foil coated with nonstick spray face down.
- Bake at 350° for about 30 minutes. Cool chicken tortilla casserole slightly before serving.
- Garnish with sliced almonds and serve with white or Spanish rice.

Yield: 6 servings



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