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Sent: Thursday, April 19, 2012 3:48 PM
To: rickmorin@earthlink.net
Subject: Paul Parent Garden Club News - April 19, 2012

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Edition 12.16	Paul Parent Garden Club News	April 19, 2012
 <p>FEATURED QUOTE : "April hath put a spirit of youth in everything." ~William Shakespeare</p> <p>Damminix Tick Tubes®</p> <p>Don't let ticks and Lyme disease hold you hostage inside this spring and summer! Damminix Tick Tubes® are here to let you <i>Take Back The Outdoors!</i></p> <p>Lyme Disease is spread by hard-to-reach deer ticks. You realize the key to protecting against Lyme is controlling your exposure to these ticks, but how? You need an intelligent tick control solution that lets you, your children and your pets safely enjoy the outdoors. Your solution is Damminix Tick Tubes®.</p> <p>It is well known that deer spread ticks infected with Lyme disease. However, did you know that these same ticks get Lyme disease from mice, not deer? Damminix Ticks Tubes® rely on the natural nesting instincts of mice to take the battle to source and deliver tick controlling permethrin directly to this host animal and the ticks it infects.</p> <p>Damminix Tick Tubes® are biodegradable, cardboard tubes filled with permethrin treated cotton balls. Mice collect the cotton to build their nests. Deer ticks that feed on mice in the Spring and the Fall are exposed to permethrin and killed. All the while, the mice, other mammals and your lands are unharmed and undisturbed.</p> <p>For more details on Damminix Tick Tubes®, please visit their website.</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>Regular Phone Hours: Mon.-Sat. 8 AM to 6 PM Sunday: 10 AM to 6 PM</p> <p>Tell your friends about Paul! Send them a copy of Paul's latest newsletter.</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>[Send >>]</p> <p>Where can I find Paul on Sunday mornings?</p> <p>Click here to find Paul Parent</p>	

ash or limestone to the garden every other year the plants will do quite well. They are heavy feeders and will quickly deplete your garden soil of Nitrogen in just one season unless you fertilize them monthly with a good organic vegetable garden fertilizer. Broccoli should never be planted in the same location of your garden every year. Rotation of the location in the garden will keep this wonderful vegetable productive and will give the soil a chance to rest and rebuild the soil fertility. Adding compost to the garden soil--leaves, animal manure or seaweed--in the fall of the year will help to rebuild the quality of the soil by spring for other types of vegetable plants.

If you have tried to grow broccoli in the past--or other cold weather crops such as cauliflower, Brussels sprouts, cabbage or collards and have had problems with small or stunted growth, hollow stems or stems that crack or split open, you have a problem that is easily solved with an application of Borax detergent powder. Soils that are on the acidic side or are low in organic matter, such as compost or animal manure are usually deficient in Boron. In the spring before planting add compost and use Jonathan Green Magic-Cal to sweeten the soil.

If the fertilizer you are using does not list Boron on the package, just add Borax detergent to your garden at the rate of 2 pounds per 1000 sq. ft. of garden and till to a depth of 6 inches deep into the soil. Boron deficiency is also responsible for corn that has discolored foliage, stunted growth and is light in color; also look for poor corn kernel development on the cob of the plant. Vegetable garden fertilizers like Vegetable-Tone or Dr. Earth Vegetable fertilizer with Pro-Biotic are complete fertilizers and will solve your problem with a Boron shortage in your garden.

Broccoli loves a well-drained soil with lots of organic matter like compost, animal manure, or seaweed added to the garden every year. This helps to hold moisture around the plant roots during periods of high heat during the summer. If your soil is heavy and on the clay side, conditioning is necessary to help root development and prevent root rot problems if the season is a wet one. Adding Garden Gypsum will also help to break up the clay in the soil and improve drainage. If your soil is on the sandy side also use Soil Moist granules at the time of planting to help hold moisture around the roots, all you will need is a good pinch per plant.

Select a full sun location in the garden for the best yield but the plant will tolerate a bit of shade. Space your plants 18 to 24 inches apart, with 2 feet between rows. If you're planting in a block, try to stagger the rows so plants have more room to grow. Once the plants are established in the garden and growing well, water them weekly to help the plant produce side shoots once you have picked the large terminal head of broccoli. A well-fed and watered plant will produce 1 to 2 inch mini heads all summer long. Pick those mini heads often and if some should develop yellow flowers, cut and remove them from the plant--or the plant will go to seed and production will stop, especially when it gets hot. Broccoli will keep over a week in a food storage bag in your refrigerator, so pick often until you have enough for a meal and then cook or just eat them raw in your summer salad. Pick your broccoli when the flower buds are small and tight for the best flavor.

Broccoli is a great source of sulforaphane, (a compound that can help prevent some types of cancer) and antioxidants that help protect the body from other disease. It is also low in saturated fats and cholesterol. Broccoli is full of vitamins like calcium, iron, potassium and a good source of protein.

Some problems you might encounter are: **cabbage lopper**--a small green caterpillar insect that is easily controlled with the new natural insecticide called Spinosad that is safe for all pollinators in your garden. A soil insect that I had problems with in the past called the **root maggot** is easily controlled with a new insecticide for the vegetable garden soil is called "Garden Eight Granules for the Vegetable Garden"; just apply in the hole around the roots at the time of planting and the problem is eliminated. This same product will also control **cutworms** when you sprinkle it around the plant after planting and it is safe and very effective, as cutworms love the cold crops vegetables when planted at this time of the year. Both of these vegetable garden insecticides are available from Bonide lawn and Garden at your favorite garden center or nursery. Once you apply the product, water the garden well to make them effective and protect your garden plants. If you have **wire worms** in your potatoes, radishes, or turnips this product will control these pests when added to the soil around the seed when planting.

If you want to grow a fall crop of broccoli, purchase your seeds now, as they will not be available later--and save them until mid-July. Start your seeds in a flat of seed-starter soil at mid-month; the seeds will germinate in about a week. Set out seedlings when the plants develop 3 sets of leaves--and plant them 12 inches apart in the garden, as this fall season crop will only allow you to harvest one large head per plant due to the length of the season. If the fall weather is nice, you may be able to harvest some additional side shoots but plan for nice large and tasty heads by late September or early October.

Some wonderful varieties to look for are 'Packman F1', 'Premium Crop F1', 'Saga F1' or 'Mariner F1', as these varieties will produce an abundance of side shoots all summer long and a large fully formed terminal head in the spring and fall season.

Keep plants away from plantings of pole or snap beans and strawberries, as they do not get along very well. Good companion plants are bush beans, lettuce, cucumbers, beets, and carrots. Now...do not forget to rotate your crops with another vegetable other than the cold weather crops and the plants in the cabbage family the following year; give the soil a chance to rest, and rebuild itself naturally. Enjoy!

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This spring has brought us unusual weather with lots of early warmth but a lack of moisture. Records have been broken in every state with the heat and that has excited all of us gardeners but the lack of rainfall is and could be a major problem in the weeks to come. Our flowering plants are blooming ahead of schedule--in many cases, the bloom time has been affected. Hot weather shortens the flowering time on plants and if our ever-changing weather pattern gives us a couple days of cold, some of our flowering plants are damaged by frost. My magnolias were hit by the frost last week, and half the flowers were damaged; how about your plants?

Here are a few things you can do to help your flowering trees and shrubs to stay in bloom longer this spring. If you have a plant in bloom right now, get out your sprinkler and water them to lengthen the blooming period, as a plant in flower requires more water than one not in flower. When your plants finish flowering they will begin to make the new growth and the foliage for this year. If the soil is dry--as it is right now--that new growth will be less. Less new growth limits the plant's ability to repair any winter damage it might have suffered--including the snowstorm we had this past October. Less new growth means less fruit or berries on your plants in the garden. Less new growth affects the plant's ability to make energy to fight off disease problems and replace any damaged foliage if insects become a problem. Get out the hose and start watering right now because every state from Maine to Florida is 5 to 8 inches of rainfall below normal since January. (So where are those April showers?)

If you have put down a lawn fertilizer or a fertilizer with crabgrass control, it will not be effective unless you water the lawn! You must change the dry granular fertilizer and crabgrass control product to a liquid so it can create a barrier to kill the crabgrass seed before it germinates. The dry fertilizer will just sit there on top of the soil and not feed the grass. You need to water right now or the lawn will not thicken, preventing future weeds from developing in the lawn, and the crabgrass will germinate and begin to grow with this heat. For this to become effective, we need at least one inch of water per week during April and May. If your grass does not get off to a good start in the next few weeks and the weather continues to stay dry, your lawn will not be able to develop a deep root system and when July arrives be prepared for a brown and weedy lawn. Just a warning--get out the hose and water now!

This weather is wonderful for working in the garden and preparing it for planting all types of perennials, shrubs, trees, roses, groundcovers, vines and some annuals and vegetables but be careful and think before you plant those tented plants. This past week I made a big effort to visit as many greenhouse, garden centers and The Big Box stores as possible and I am SCARED for you because The Big Box stores are selling you plants that ARE NOT READY to be planted yet. I want you to think before planting this spring, it is only April 19 and in the Northeast there is a very good possibility that we will have a killing frost in the next two or three weeks.

It is too early to plant most vegetables unless they are considered "cold crops" like broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, celery, onions, lettuce and some seeds like peas, spinach and beets. The only flowers that are safe to plant now are pansies, Johnny-jump-ups and violets. Geraniums will be killed or stunted so please do not fall into the box store trap; WAIT until the time is right to plant them! If you want to purchase a hanging basket, it must come inside your home at night; it may not die but you will lose the new flower buds, or your plant will be damaged and lose the ability to perform properly for you later--WAIT! Don't even think of planting tomatoes, peppers, vine crops, impatiens, marigolds, and herbs like basil and parsley, it's too early!

All I can say is, "shame on you Big Box Stores for taking advantage on the new gardener and some gardeners who should know better." These gardeners will feel that they have done something wrong, become discouraged and never try to grow perennials or roses because they failed with the easy-to-grow annuals or vegetables. Customer service at its worst!

What you should be doing now is pruning your roses and fertilizing them to help get them off to a good start when the weather stabilizes. Clean all your perennial beds, divide those that need to be divided and fertilize them also. Set up your peony cages; fasten the vines to the trellises and if any plants need to be moved, now is the time to move them--unless they are in flower. It's also time to fertilize your spring flowering bulbs like tulips, and daffodils--especially those that are not flowering--with Bulb-Tone or Dr. Earth Bulb Food with Pro Biotic. When the flowers begin to fade, be sure to remove the faded flowers--but not the foliage for at least a month after they bloom.

Your clematis and lilacs need to be limed--or use wood ash from your fireplace or wood stove to help keep the soil sweet and encourage more flowers and strong growth. Use Jonathan Green Magic-Cal to help control and eliminate the moss that is trying to take over your lawn and garden. Did you know that acid soils, that have moss growing in them, will have more weeds growing in them, because weeds prefer acid soil? Annual and perennial gardens, vegetable gardens, planters and your flowering shrubs and trees should be limed every other if you want the most flowers from your plants, acid soil will limit their ability to make flowers!

Edge your flower and shrub beds and cover them with 1 to 3 inches of bark mulch or compost to help control weeds and prevent the hot summer sun from drying them out. Start pruning your privacy hedges right now--before the new growth covers the plants--to control their size and help keep them nice and thick; "remember, pruning stimulates new growth on all plants." Non flowering plants like burning bush, privet hedges, barberry and evergreens like hemlock, arborvitae, holly, boxwood and yews will look better if pruned before the plants begins to grow, because you're not damaging the foliage and the new foliage that forms will fill in holes in the plant made by the damage of snow and weather. At this time of the year, you can cut back these plants by 25 to 30% to control their size--and when the new growth forms, they will

look like they were never pruned.

Visit your local nursery and ask for help if you're not sure what to do, as these people are trained and experienced professionals who love to garden and want to share their knowledge with you. Look at the new shrubs, trees, and plants in their yard and I am sure you will find something that will excite you about gardening this year. Remember there is NO dumb gardening question, as we are always learning about the new plants and the new garden-related products to help them grow and stay insect and disease free. Please, this year think about what you want to do and then ask help to do it right the first time, not doing this is "Dumb."

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Mevagissey

A Customized Gardening Tour of England and the 2012 Chelsea Flower Show

Paul Parent hosts a tour that includes the Wisley Gardens, the Chelsea Flower Show, Tower of London, Roman Baths & Pump Room, Riverford Organic Farm, Garden House, Rosemoor Gardens, Lost Gardens of Heligan, Village of Mevagissey, Stonehenge, the Wilton House Garden Centre and more.

[Click here for details.](#)



This Week's Question

This popular tropical plant was named after the French Admiral who discovered it in Brazil in 1768. What is the plant?

This Week's Prize:

Bio-tone® Starter Plus
All Natural Plant Food Enhanced with Bacteria and Mycorrhizae

- Microbe-enhanced all natural plant food
- Includes both endo and ecto mycorrhizae
- Grows larger root mass to help plants establish fast
- Promotes bigger blooms
- Reduces transplant loss

For more information, [see the Espoma site.](#)

[Click Here to Answer](#)

Last Week's Question:

What members of the grass family (Poaceae) can be (and often is, in many countries) used as construction material? (Note - we aren't talking about thatching a roof-we mean for the actual building.)

Last Week's Winner:

Steven Rothert

Last Week's Answer:

"Bamboo. I lived in Okinawa, Japan and watched them use it for everything."

Last Week's Prize:

Bio-tone® Starter Plus

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

[Click here to order online.](#)

FEATURED RECIPE:

Simple Crustless Broccoli Quiche



This is a simple and tasty dish that's a cross between a quiche and a frittata. Feel free to throw in your own variations: other vegetables, other cheeses, ham or bacon or even crab.

What You Need

- 4 eggs
- 1 cup half-and-half cream
- 1 cup Swiss cheese, grated
- 2 cups broccoli florets
- 1/2 teaspoon sea salt
- 1/4 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1/8 teaspoon nutmeg
- 1/8 teaspoon white pepper

Step by Step:

- Pre-heat the oven to 350 degrees F.
- Blanch the broccoli, saving the stems for soup (If you are using frozen broccoli, thaw it first).
- Beat eggs and cream, then add the cheese and mix well.
- Stir in the broccoli, salt, garlic powder, nutmeg, and pepper.
- Pour into a nine-inch quiche pan and bake for about 30-35 minutes or until a knife inserted in the center comes out clean.

Yield: 4-6 servings



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