



From: Paul Parent Garden Club <newsletter@paulparentclub.com>
Sent: Thursday, June 3, 2010 3:30 PM
To: rickmorin@earthlink.net
Subject: Paul Parent Garden Club News - June 3, 2010

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Edition 10.22	Paul Parent Garden Club News	June 3, 2010
	<p>Featured Quote: Flowers are sunshine, food and medicine to the soul. ~ Luther Burbank</p> <p>Come see Paul's Garden!</p> <p>Join us for the 16th annual "Private Gardens of the Kennebunks" Garden Tour, July 17, 2010 from 10:00 - 4:00. SHINE OR RAIN. All proceeds benefit the prevention programs of the Child Abuse Prevention Council of York County, Maine. Tour nine lovely gardens throughout Kennebunk and Kennebunkport. Advance tickets are \$15.00 before July 1st; \$20.00 July 1st through day of the event. Please call (207) 985-5975 or visit http://www.kidsfreetogrow.org for more information!</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>Grow Beautiful Plants with Less Water</p> <p><input type="text"/></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• stores over 200 times its weight in tap water• releases a steady supply of water as your plants need it• non-toxic, safe and economical to use• reduces plant watering by 50%• reduces transplant shock• lasts several seasons <p><input type="text"/></p> <p>The number one selling late spring, early summer flowering shrub is the lilac. As you drive around town, look at the homes you pass by and you will be amazed how many of them have lilac in their yards. These plants are magnificent; they are easy to grow and the flowers they make will fill the air in your yard with a delightful fragrance. What a wonderful plant to add to any garden that has lots of sunshine. Sunshine is the main demand for this plant and the more it receives the more flowers</p>		<p>Where can I find Paul on Sunday mornings?</p> <p>Click here to find Paul Parent Garden Club™ radio stations.</p> <p>Have a Look Around Our Website:</p> <p>Home About Paul Paul's Recipes</p> <p>Subscribe to our newsletter!</p> <p>Click here to subscribe, unsubscribe or change your address.</p> <p><input type="text"/></p>

it will make. They will grow in a partial shade but flowers will be far and few apart. Do not fool yourself; if your yard does not have sun most of the day, plant a different shrub.

Lilacs are deciduous and will lose their foliage during the winter months. The leaves grow 2 to 5 inches long, oval in shape and dark green to blue green in color depending on variety you select. The foliage is not known for fall color and is rather dull. If we have a hot and humid summer, the plant can develop Powdery Mildew on the foliage. This problem is controlled easily with Serenade organic fungicide if you begin treating the plant in early July, knowing you had a problem in past years. It does not kill the plant but if it happens every year, the plant will develop fewer flowers each year. Irrigation systems that wet the foliage regularly can also cause the same problem, so adjust the sprinkler heads. A fertilizer that contains mycorrhizae bacteria will help to prevent the problem as it doubles the root system size in just a few weeks and reduces stress to the plant. Granular products like Bio-Tone or Dr Earth Shrub fertilizer must be worked into the soil, to contact the roots to do the job. The new liquid Plant Thrive Mycorrhizae, can just be watered into the soil.

Lilacs are multi-stem shrubs that, depending on the variety, will grow from 6 to 15 feet tall and wide. They grow in a mounding habit with stiff upright growing branches. As the plant ages, the lower part of the plant will have exposed stems with little foliage. When young and actively growing, many suckering shoots will develop at the base of the plant. I have had great luck keeping the plant full by removing half to three quarters of these shoots. The shoots that remain will in time flower as the older branches slow down, producing fewer flowers. You can also dig some of those shoots in April or May and transplant them to a new garden to start new plants. The flowers develop on the tips of the branches growing 3 to 7 inches tall and pyramidal shaped. You can cut the flowers on short 12 to 18 inch stems and place them in a vase of water for the home; the fragrance is just wonderful. Pick early in the morning before the sun gets too hot and remove some of the leaves to prevent wilting. If stems are thicker than a pencil, split them in two at the base of the stem -- this cut will help the flowers get water easier and faster. Keep them out of the sun and if it is hot in the house add ice cubes daily to cool the flower down.

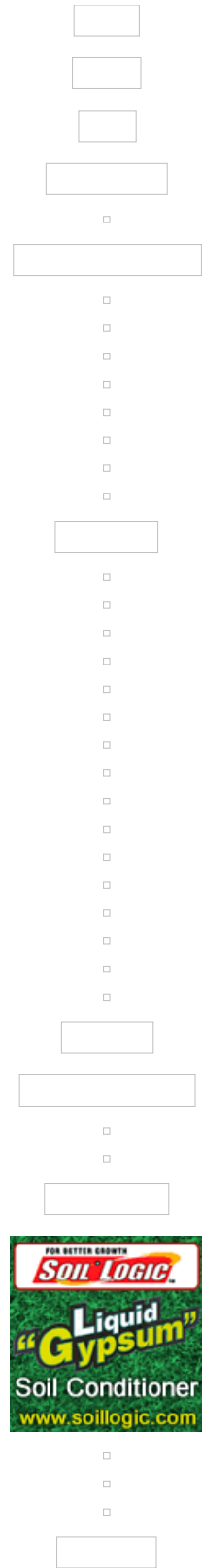
Lilacs love a sweet soil and should not be planted in gardens that have rhododendrons growing in them, as they prefer an acidic type soil. If you apply limestone, wood ash or the new Jonathan Green lawn and Garden Mag-A-Cal lime substitute in the spring and fall, the flowers soon cover the plant. Lilacs will also grow better if you can keep the grass from growing under the branches right up to the trunk of the plant. Cut out all the grass under the plant, making a small mulch bed. I have found that if you plant flowers under the lilac, you tend to water the plant more, as well as fertilize the flowers and this will help the lilac plant to make flowers buds during the summer for next spring flowers. Feed plants every spring with a granular fertilizer such as Plant-Tone or Dr. Earth Shrub fertilizer. A well-fed plant has fewer problems with disease during the summer also.

If you should notice a single branch die in the clump during the summer, check the base of the plant for small holes in the trunk -- it could be a Lilac Bores. Usually this is not a major problem, but the branch should be removed and the plant treated with Bayer Tree and Shrub systemic insecticide. Prune as the plant comes into bloom in the spring. Any non-blooming stems in the lilac should be cut back to 4 feet tall and fertilized in the spring. During the summer, the stem will produce foliage and in just 2 to 3 years, it will be flowering. Remove as much as 1/3 of the non-flowering stems each year to control the height and size of the plant.

Today Lilacs come in many colors from white to pink, lavender, purple, red and even several varieties that are bi-colored. Common Lilacs seem to be the most fragrant but the newer French Hybrids have more colors to choose from, bloom later in the season and have different leaf texture. If you have a small yard, look into the dwarf types that will grow up to six feet tall or when pruned, can be kept at 4 feet. If you are looking for summer color for your yard, look at the Japanese Tree Lilac. This plant is a small growing tree 20 to 25 feet tall and 15 to 20 feet wide. The Tree Lilac flowers during June and early July with white flower clusters. The flowers grow 6 to 12 inches tall and are not as showy as the bush type of lilac, but are still beautiful. Summer flowering trees are rare and this tree is wonderful to look at. The bark looks like a cherry tree: smooth and spotted. The flowers are not as fragrant as the bush type Lilac, but it has a scent similar to that of the privet hedge plant. Care for the tree type Lilac the same way you do for the bush type. This plant is also very hardy and will grow when temperatures drop to minus 30 to 40 degrees.

Last year I was looking for a different ground cover for a shady spot under pine trees in my back yard and came across Sweet Woodruff. I remembered the name as a type of herb, but could not remember what its uses were. I liked the foliage and the flower so I purchased a few plants to try them. I set the plants in the garden about 18 inches apart in early May and pampered them, as you should for the first season in a new garden. Sweet Woodruff is a perennial plant but like most perennials, it dies to the ground in the fall and redevelops in the spring. When spring arrived this year, I could see that they had a great winter rest and were developing quickly in the area where they were planted. By mid May, the five plants that I had planted 18 inches apart were now all connected and literally had become one clump. I had selected the perfect ground cover for that area and it was a charming plant to look at.

Sweet Woodruff is a low growing perennial plant 6 to 8 inches tall. The stems come out of the ground in April and quickly develop a whorl of elongated leaves like tiny umbrellas on the tip of this short stem. Most stems have seven or more leaves 2 to 3 inches, long to each whorl. The stems do not branch out making new growth like most plants; they are all individual. In May, the delicate looking flowers begin to develop and they will last on the plant until July. The flowers come in clusters, each cluster containing many small white star shaped tubular flowers. The flower clusters are small--about 3 inches wide--and fragrant. Most ground covers are heavy, dense, thick and coarse looking; but not the Sweet Woodruff; it is delicate and airy and it will soften your garden



floor with its foliage and flowers.

Plant Sweet Woodruff in partial to full shade, even deep shade. It will grow in full sun if you water the garden regularly and does not get too hot during the day where you live. The plants will do best in a sandy or light soil that is well drained; these plants will not tolerate a heavy clay type soil or a wet spot in the garden. Plant Sweet Woodruff with compost and a bit of Soil Moist granules to keep the moisture available near the roots of the plant for the first year. I use a fertilizer that contains mycorrhizae bacteria to encourage root development such as Bio-Tone or The new Liquid Plant Thrive. Water 2 times or more each week if it does not rain. I also liquid fed my plants several times during the summer with Miracle Grow the first year. Now that the plants are established, little to no care is needed and the plant will continue to spread at a moderate speed.

If plants get out of their designated area, dig them up and divide them to relocate to other areas on your property. They divide easily and that is the best way to propagate them for friends and family. Once established, the flowers will make seeds that fall to the ground and start new plants. The plant is not invasive, but it is strong growing and can choke out less vigorous perennial plants by overrunning them like a wave of water at the seashore. Sweet Woodruff will do well under trees, shrubs and large growing perennials like Hostas or Hellebores. You can also plant in flower beds that have spring flowering bulbs planted in them as the spring flowering bulbs will grow right through the foliage of the Sweet Woodruff.

I fertilize them once a year now in the spring and feed them after I clean the perennial flowerbeds during March and April. If it gets hot and dry and the plants begin to wilt, water the garden and they will quickly recover with little stress. One last positive aspect of the Sweet Woodruff is that it has few to no disease or insect problems, so enjoy them in your garden.



When the heat of summer arrives, the vegetable that activates my taste buds is the cucumber. Cucumbers are great all year long, but during the summer months, their flavor is unmatched. A fresh picked cucumber from the vegetable garden or container has a unique flavor that the winter market cannot match. I like picking the cucumbers from the garden and feeling the tiny burs on the skin, a protective device to protect them from animals when young. In addition, the lack of paraffin wax covering the cucumber that helps to keep it fresh, as cucumbers are mostly water. The season may be short for this long green vegetable but when they are producing, I cannot get enough of them.

Here are a few things to remember about growing cucumbers. The roots of the plant are very shallow growing and if your soil is not prepared with compost, peat moss or animal manure, the plants will not produce as many cucumbers. The growing season for the plant will be shorter when the real heat arrives during mid to late August if you are not faithful with your watering. Lack of "regular" watering will give you odd shaped and bitter tasting cucumbers. To help keep the cucumbers productive be sure to add Soil Moist, a wonderful, water-holding crystal, to the ground when planting. If you have not done so, it is not too late to help the plant. At about 18 inches from the plants, punch several holes in the ground 6 to 8 inches deep, and put in a pinch in each hole and cover with soil. Remember Soil Moist expands 200 times, holding water for the roots when the plant needs it, so do not overuse this product.

Fertilize every couple of weeks if you are using a liquid feed like Miracle Grow and apply it on the foliage as well as the ground. Kelp or seaweed applied to the ground when planting or as a liquid soil and foliar feed will help keep the plant flowering and produce more fruit. If you are using a granular food, apply as a band around the base of the plant 18 to 24 inches from the stems and do this monthly. I have always found that vine plants need more fertilizer than a bush plant because the plant has to work harder to get the food to the growing tips. Because the tips keep growing longer, the food has to travel further each day. Liquid foliar fertilizer really helps the plant because the food is where it is needed. The new mycorrhizae fertilizer "Plant Thrive" is a liquid plant stimulator developed to double the root system of the plant. Just remember the cucumber roots are shallow and when water gets scarce the cucumber gets bitter, so feed the plant a product Like Plant Thrive that develops a bigger root system.

If your plant is making a lot of flowers but few fruit, a couple of things could be causing this. Cucumbers produce many male flowers early as they grow to encourage bees to come to pollinate the plant. Female flowers will come when the plant is well rooted and able to get what it needs from the soil to make the fruit. This is why well fed cucumber plants produce earlier. Cloudy, cold, and wet weather prevents the bees from doing their job in the garden--and that is pollination. Flowers last just a few days on the plant and then fall if not pollinated. If you see that the weather pattern is calling for a rainy spell, here is what you can do to increase the cucumbers on the plants. Female flowers have a tiny cucumber behind the flower and the male flower does not. Before the weather changes, pick a couple of male flowers from the plant and rub them on the female flowers front to front. This will move the pollen from the male to the female flower just like the bees do and the plant will make cucumbers even when the weather is bad. Plant yellow marigolds near all vine vegetables to encourage bees to visit the garden.

Sometimes, cucumbers make fruit faster than you can eat it. Pick them and place them in your refrigerator or give them to the neighbors. If you allow them to turn yellow or orange, they begin to make mature seeds and the plant will stop producing. The goal of the cucumber is to make seeds and if you allow this to happen, the plant has done its job; it will rest and make leaves, so pick often. The best time to pick cucumbers is first thing in the morning as they are full of moisture and firm. Once the plants get hot, they lose moisture to the heat, soften, lose some flavor and do not keep as long in the refrigerator.

Grow cucumbers on the ground like most vine crops or on a trellis to save room in the garden.

Trellis cucumbers will grow straighter as they dangle from the plant and flowers are more visible to insects in the area. Cucumbers have few insect problems and Eight garden dust will control them. Finally, avoid watering the garden late in the day, as wet foliage will encourage powdery mildew, a white powdery dust that if not controlled will kill the plant. If it starts to form on the foliage, use "Serenade" organic disease control to keep plants clean and productive. All you need now is salt and pepper! Enjoy!



This Week's Question:

When harvested young, what vegetable could Queen Anne's Lace replace in your salad?

This Week's Prize:
Espoma Organic Potting Mix

- Contains Myco-tone® mycorrhizae
- For all indoor and outdoor containers.
- In 4, 8, 16 qt., 1 and 2 cu. ft. bags.

[Click Here to Answer](#)

Last Week's Question:

What makes the bristlecone pine unique?

Last Week's Prize:
Espoma Organic Potting Mix

Last Week's Winner:
James Servideo

Last Week's Answer:

The bristlecone pines are a small group of pine trees that are thought to reach an age far greater than that of any other single living organism known, up to nearly 5,000 years.

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

Warm Spinach and Mushroom Salad

What You'll Need:

- 4 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 medium shallot, finely minced
- 1 1/2 cups mushrooms, sliced
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 2 1/2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
- salt and pepper to taste
- 1 10 oz. package fresh spinach, washed and dried
- 4 large basil leaves, chopped

Step by Step:

- Heat 1 tablespoon olive oil in a skillet over medium heat until warm.
- Add shallots and mushrooms, cooking until they are soft.
- Add garlic to skillet and cook, stirring until you smell the garlic, about 1-2 minutes more.
- Stir in the remaining oil, balsamic vinegar and salt and pepper, mixing well.
- Remove from heat and allow the mushroom mixture to cool until just warm, about seven minutes.
- Arrange spinach evenly in a serving bowl, cover with chopped basil. Pour the warm

mushrooms over the greens and toss lightly to coat. Serve immediately.

Serves 4



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