

**From:** Paul Parent Garden Club <newsletter@paulparentclub.com>  
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Edition 11.24	Paul Parent Garden Club News	June 16, 2011
	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Featured Quote:</b></p> <p>"God made rainy days so gardeners could get the housework done." ~ <b>Author Unknown</b></p> <div style="text-align: center; background-color: #fff9c4; padding: 10px;"><h2 style="margin: 0;">Come see the Private Gardens of the Kennebunks</h2></div> <p>Join us for our 17th annual "Private Gardens of the Kennebunks" Garden Tour, July 16, 2011 from 10:00 - 4:00. Tour eight lovely gardens throughout Kennebunk and Kennebunkport. All proceeds from the 2011 Garden tour will benefit the prevention programs of the Child Abuse Prevention Council of York County, Maine. Advance tickets are \$15.00 before July 1st; \$20.00 July 1st through day of the event. Please call (207) 985-5975 or visit <a href="http://www.kidsfreetogrow.org">http://www.kidsfreetogrow.org</a> for more information!</p> <div style="background-color: #fff9c4; padding: 10px;"><p><b>New This Year:</b> A special reception on <b>Friday July 15th, from 6:30 to 8:00 PM</b>. The Cape Arundel Inn is hosting a wine and appetizer event in a special garden for exclusive viewing the night before the garden tour. Paul will be giving a talk and a question and answer program. Only 60 tickets are available for \$50 each. Call 207-985-5975 for information.</p></div> <div style="text-align: center; margin-top: 20px;"><input type="text"/></div>	<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; margin-top: 20px;"><b>Where can I find Paul on Sunday mornings?</b></p> <p><a href="#">Click here to find Paul Parent Garden Club™ radio stations.</a></p> <div style="text-align: center; margin-top: 20px;"><p><b>Have a Look Around Our Website:</b></p></div> <p style="text-align: center; margin-top: 20px;"><b>Subscribe to our newsletter!</b></p> <p><a href="#">Click here to subscribe, unsubscribe or change your address.</a></p> <div style="text-align: center; margin-top: 20px;"><input type="text"/></div>

**Dr Earth Organic 5 Tomato, Vegetable & Herb Fertilizer**



water to help them make bigger peppers. I dissolve one tablespoon of Epsom Salt to a gallon of water and give each plant about a quart of the mixture and you will not believe what it does for the plant. This was a garden tip from my Grandfather many years ago that stills work today.

I looked at my roses as the flower buds are just about ready to burst open and noticed some of the lower leaves had been skeletonized and had a white tinge to them. I found some small one-inch long pale green caterpillars eating away--a bit of Captain Jack or Spinosad takes care of them, and the damage will stop. All I want you to do is look at your plants regularly, so you can spot the damage on the plant before it gets out of hand and ruin your hard work in the garden.

Clematis is now growing fast and now is the time to train it, and tie it up on your trellis or arbor so you can better enjoy the flowers on the plant. Remember clematis loves a sweet soil so if you want your plants to grow better, be sure to use limestone or wood ash around the plant every year. If your plant is in full sun, place a brick or cobble stone standing up on the ground, on the south side of the plant about 2 to 3 inches from the stems. This will create shade on the stems as they develop from the base of the plant and prevent sun damage during the summer and winter months. Keeping the bottom six inches of stems cool during the summer and protected from the sun during the winter is the most important tip that I can give you for growing clematis.

If you're growing fruit trees, be sure to re-apply your fruit tree spray as soon as possible as all the rain has washed off the protection you put on the earlier. If you want to stay organic with your fruit tree, look for a wonderful product call "Organocide," a combination insect and disease control product developed for the citrus growers in Florida, which works great on all your fruit trees and berry plants. If you want clean fruit, you must apply this product every 10 to 14 days just like the orchards do--more often if you get heavy rain.

If you planted lettuce, Swiss chard or spinach by seed, it may be time to thin your planting bed or do a bit of transplanting while the weather is still cool. Give your plants room to grow and you will have better and more productive plants in your garden. Clean around your onions, leeks and shallots, as crabgrass is now beginning to grow in the garden--I know it is in my onion patch.

If you grew garlic for the first time and want larger bulbs and more garlic cloves on that bulb in the ground, look closely at your plants now for the flower bud that is forming on top of the plant. This flower bud looks like an arrow; it's a pointed bud. It looks like a garden gnome hat that grows by twisting and curling on its long stem. When this twisting begins to happen, remove the flower stems right down to the closest leaf on the plant and all the energy will go to the bulb--or you could leave it on the plant and it will make seeds for next year. I remove mine and use some of the flowers or "scapes," as they are called, for use in flower arrangements--cool looking with cut flowers in a vase. You can also steam them like you do asparagus and they taste wonderful with a bit of butter, salt and pepper. Try them this year if you never have before; they have a mild flavor of garlic. Enjoy!

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Are you looking for a plant that does best when neglected, you heard right, neglected after it is established in your garden? Well if you have a spot in your garden that is not a show place, but you want some color there during June to early July, I may just have the plant for you. A location on the side of the garage maybe, a spot that needs to be covered--like the trash barrels storage area, the gas or electric meter on the side of the house or even the hideous pipe that vents out the gases from your leaching system.

The plant is called sweet mock-orange, and it will grow most anywhere from a soil with heavy clay to sandy loam. Your soil can be anything from a very acidic soil with moss growing on it, to a soil well-limed and very sweet. The location can be full sun to half a day of shade--and once this plant is established and growing well in the garden, it does not need to be fertilized and only very rarely watered by you.

In the last couple of weeks I have even seen mock-orange growing in traffic islands in the middle of a parking lot, in a planting bed 18 inches wide growing up against the side of a Wendy's restaurant with a sidewalk in front of it and in a planting bed near a supermarket with stone mulch covering the bed. All these planting areas had no irrigation, the plants looked wonderful, and they were covered with flower buds. Then I remembered that I have had several questions in the past enquiring about why "my plant, the mock-orange, does not flower?" I guess I found out the answer, you aren't neglecting it enough!

Mock-orange is a wonderful flowering plant at this time of the year. The flowers are 1 to 1.5 inches in diameter; the flower has only 4 petals, almost like your flowering crabapples, but pure powdery white. The center is filled with bright yellow pollen sacks.

The flower is fragrant in most varieties, but before you purchase a plant smell the flowers to make sure the plant you have selected is fragrant. The flowers come in clusters, not individually on the plant, and some new hybrids also have double flower petals growing up to 2 inches in diameter. The flower can have a citrus to pineapple scent to them and can be very sweet smelling.

The foliage is not impressive but a nice green color, oval, with deep lines of veins that look to be indented in the leaf; there is no fall color as the leaves fall from the plant while still green. The leaf will grow 1.5 to 3 inches long and 1 to 2 inches wide. You can also find some varieties with green and white foliage, called 'Variegatus,' or green and yellow foliage, called 'Aureus,' but they are better suited for warmer climates from southern New England and south.

The plant will grow in a rounded shape when mature but when young it will be more upright; as the branches mature they will arch over, often making the plant look straggly, if not pruned after

they finish flowering in July. The plant will grow fast--usually over a foot a year, and even more if you fertilize it in the spring. The mock-orange can grow 6 to 8 feet tall and just as wide but if you prune the plant every year after it finishes flowering, you can keep the plant smaller--4 to 6 feet in height and width.

I recommend that you prune the plant to control the size because it can overpower other plants in your planting bed unless you space the plants properly when planting. You can also use mock-oranges as a hedge planting, because the plants do grow thick and dense when mature. Just remember the green leaf types have no striking leaf qualities--just a plain green leaf--and tend to blend into the landscape.

Purchase plants in bloom from a nursery, to better select flower type (single or double) and to smell the flowers for their fragrance. Plant the mock-orange in a well-drained soil that has been conditioned with compost, animal manure, or peat moss so that the plant can get established quickly in your garden. Plants will not tolerate standing water at any time of the year. If your soil is sandy, add Soil Moist granules to help retain moisture during hot and dry periods during the summer months. Mycorrhizae powder from Natural Technology or Bio-Tone from Espoma will help speed root development and encourage more flower production on the plant.

If you remove older branches from the plant that are becoming hard and woody every few years, it will help the plant to produce more new growth and flowers. The new growth is more productive and it should be pruned to control the plant's size when the flowers fade on the plant. The root system of this plant is very strong when established and that is why I am telling you not to feed the plant after it is established in your garden. It is perfectly capable of growing without your help but occasional pruning is recommended.

This is an old-fashioned plant that was grown in the gardens of your grandparents, and has little to no problems with insects and diseases. When gardening became more complicated with the introduction of new hybrid plants that required more care, the mock-orange became less popular because we gave them too much care and they grew too fast and produced fewer flowers. So remember this, if you have a mock-orange and it is not flowering well, it needs **less** maintenance, **less** care, **no fertilizer** once established in your garden--and only water the plant when it begins to wilt!

Stress makes the plant grow better; if you have areas in your garden where nothing seems to grow this might just be the plant for you. If you like flowering plants in your garden but have little time to care for them this might just be the plant for you. If you like fragrant flowers on shrubs that will grow anywhere this is the plant for you! Enjoy.

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When cucumbers are fresh picked from the garden, I don't think that there is a better tasting vegetable. I love picking cucumbers first thing in the morning while they are still cool from the evening temperatures. Did you know that they will keep better and longer if they are cool when you put them in your refrigerator for storage?

This summer, if you pick your cucumbers during the heat of the day, drop them in your sink filled with cold water before placing them in the refrigerator. The taste will be better and they will firm up, with the cold water slowing down on water loss through the skin. Cucumbers will keep well in your refrigerator for up to a week but the best taste is to eat them the same day you pick them. That why when you buy cucumbers during the winter in the supermarket they are covered with wax to help hold internal moisture in them and prevent them from getting soft and bitter.

I also love the feel of the tiny spines on them as you grab them and twist them free from the vine; no other vegetable feels that way. Can you feel them in your mind? The cucumber has no smell until you peel it; think about that. With cucumbers "bigger isn't better" because smaller cucumbers are tastier, crisper, the seeds are much smaller and there are fewer seeds in them for you to burp. Pick your cucumbers daily to prevent them from overgrowing and becoming bitter and pithy. To enjoy the best tasting cucumbers pick them while they are all green as the summer heat will make them grow fast and over ripe. Over ripe cucumbers will have a yellow underside, or yellowing on the tip where the blossom was! Over ripe cucumbers should be removed from the plant and tossed into your compost pile. If you allow the cucumber to grow large, the plant will produce seeds and less fruit will form on the vine in the future because the plant has achieved its goal, which is to make mature seeds. So pick often for more fruit per plant.

Cucumbers will grow best when you soil temperature reaches 70 to 80 degrees or warmer, so never rush to get the seed or plants in the ground early, especially when Spring weather is cool. To help warm up the soil I use a landscape fabric on the ground and cut a hole in it to plant the seeds. This fabric also keeps out weeds that steal much needed moisture and food for the plant, plus prevents the sun and wind from drying up the soil. This fabric also keeps out slugs, keeps the cucumbers clean and prevents rotting if the weather gets stormy and wet.

Cucumbers take up also of space in your garden, so last year I built a trellis with 4 by 4 timbers and galvanized wire for the vine to grow on, saving a large growing area for other vegetables to grow on. The result was fantastic because I could see all the cucumbers on the vine and I had very few that over-grew. The cucumbers were easier to pick, I never stepped on small cucumbers or hurt the vines they grow on and I had more cucumbers than ever. The cucumbers always grew straight; the flowers were more noticeable on the vine making it easier for the bees to pollinate the plant, making more cucumbers for me.

Cucumbers also love a good garden soil, so before you plant add compost, animal manure, or

peat moss to help retain water and provide nutrition to the plant. I always add Soil Moist granules, a good fertilizer that contains mycorrhizae and sea kelp to the soil before planting. If you grow cucumbers and when the summer gets hot your plant produces cucumbers with a small shrunken end like a nipple on a baby bottle, you have a plant with small roots.

Water and nutrition will determine the amount and the quality of the cucumbers produce on the plant. That is why I use both Soil Moist and mycorrhizae when planting. These two ingredients will double the size of the root system, helping the plant to collect what it wants from the soil to keep it productive even when the weather gets hot and dry. When the plant begins to flower, you must water heavily and often right up until the fall or the plant will stop producing cucumbers or they will grow like baseballs, round, yellow and bitter tasting.

The one thing that will happen early-on when you grow cucumbers is that the plant will produce many male flowers on the plant to attract the bees into your garden and few female flowers. Do not panic; its natural and soon the female flowers will develop as the plant matures and grows larger. Now for a quick "Sex Education tip" The female flower has a tiny cucumber behind it and the male does not. If you want to help the bees and speed up cucumber production pick off a male flower, remove the outer yellow flower petals and rub the pollen sacs on the inside of the female flower. You are now doing the same thing the bees do to the female flower and soon you will have cucumbers, the same principle works with all squash, melons, and pumpkins.

Cucumbers will get a white film on the leaf if the weather is hot and humid or you use overhead watering in the early evening causing Powdery Mildew problems. Water early in the day, never at night and if it begins to develop treat the plant with a wonderful organic product called "Garden Serenade" or "Organocide," an organic fungicide/ insecticide combination. If holes develop in the leaf it is likely to be the striped cucumber beetle, which is easily controlled with the new Organic Beetle Killer from Bonide Lawn and Garden which uses pyrethrum made from chrysanthemum flowers. Great companions in the garden are bush beans, cold weather crops like cabbage, broccoli, cauliflower, Brussels sprouts and lettuce, stay away from potatoes!!!

Now for fun facts about cucumbers: if you feel tired in the afternoon put down the soft drink and peel up a cucumber because it is a great source of B vitamin and carbohydrates that can provide a quick pick-me-up and last for hours. Cucumbers contain most of the vitamins you will need every day, just one cucumber contains Vitamins B1, B2, B3, B5, B6, folic acid, Vitamin C, calcium, iron, magnesium, phosphorus, potassium and zinc. If you're looking to fight off afternoon or evening hunger and keep on your diet, eat a cucumber. Cucumbers were used in Europe by trappers, traders and early explorers to thwart off starvation.

Cucumber slices can be used to shine up your shoes if you have no polish, and the chemical reaction with the leather will help make it repel water. If you drank too much at that party, before going to bed eat a few slices of cucumber and wake up refreshed and headache free. Cucumbers contain enough sugar, Vitamin B and electrolytes to replenish essential nutrients the body lost, keeping everything in equilibrium, thus avoiding both hangover and headache--give it a try, and let me know.

If slugs are ruining your flower beds, place a few slices in a small aluminum pie plate in your garden. I have been told the chemical reaction of the cucumber and aluminum will produce a scent that is undetectable to humans but drives garden pest crazy...and they will leave your garden.

If you're out of WD-40 and have a squeaky hinge, rub a cucumber slice on the problem and the squeak is gone. If you have bad breath and don't have a mint or gum, place a slice of cucumber on the top of your mouth and hold it in place with your tongue for 30 seconds to kill the bacteria in your mouth.

If your children have used crayons on your walls slowly rub a cucumber slice on the decorations and watch the cucumber erase the markings. One last thing...if you like cucumbers with the skin intact or partially removed, eat them all you can this summer while they are fresh. The ones in the supermarket with the waxy covering are all you will be able to get during the cold days of winter, so enjoy the fresh picked ones while you can!!!

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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:**

Buddleia (also spelled buddleja), is very popular in butterfly gardens. Where did it get the name buddleia?

[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**

The crape myrtle is naturalized throughout much of North America (and grows in all 50 states in the US). However, it is not native to North America. Where did it originate?

**Last Week's Winner:**

Jack Lombardo

**Last Week's Answer:**

Asia

**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:**

**Almond Chicken Salad**

**What You'll Need:**

- 4 green onions, thinly sliced
- 1 large carrot, shredded
- 1 red bell pepper, cut into 1/2 inch pieces
- 1/2 pound sugar snap peas, halved
- 2 cups chopped, cooked chicken breast meat
- 1/2 cup fresh cilantro leaves
- 1/2 cup blanched slivered almonds, toasted
- 2 tablespoons white sugar
- 2 tablespoons distilled white vinegar
- 1 1/2 tablespoons sesame oil
- 1 tablespoon teriyaki sauce

- 1 tablespoon ground dry mustard

**Step by Step:**

- In a large bowl, mix together the onions, carrot, red pepper, peas, chicken, cilantro and almonds. Set aside.
- In a small bowl, whisk together the sugar, vinegar, sesame oil, teriyaki sauce and dry mustard until smooth.
- Pour over salad mixture and toss until coated.
- Serve in pita pockets or on a bed of lettuce.

Yield: 4 servings



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