

**From:** Paul Parent Garden Club <newsletter@paulparentclub.com>  
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Edition 12.22	Paul Parent Garden Club News	June 4, 2012
	<p align="center"><b>Featured Quote:</b> Flowers are sunshine, food and medicine to the soul. ~ Luther Burbank</p>	<p align="center"><b>Gifts for the Gardener</b> <a href="#">Here are some great ideas for gifts your favorite gardener will just love!</a></p>
<p align="center"><input type="text"/></p>		<p align="center"><b>Contact Information:</b></p>
<p align="center"><b>PureSpray GREEN</b></p>		<p><b>E-Mail:</b> <a href="#">Click to contact us.</a></p>
<p>PureSpray GREEN is an all-in-one organic solution designed for insect and disease control in your home garden. It's ideal for use on flowers, fruits, vegetables, shrubs and trees--and it can be used for both indoor and outdoor applications. PureSpray GREEN allows for true organic protection all in one convenient bottle.</p>	<p><input type="text"/></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>As it is listed as organic (Organic Materials Review Institute - OMRI), you can feel good about using PureSpray GREEN in your home garden. It has been a proven tool used by commercial growers worldwide to protect high-value crops for almost two decades--now, that same effectiveness is available to you.</p>	<p><input type="text"/></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>For more information, <a href="#">visit the Clear Choice website.</a></p>		
<p align="center"><input type="text"/></p>		
<p>You may not have heard of this plant before, but once you hear about it and see it at your local nursery, you will want one for your garden. The plant, called the Red-vein Enkianthus, has many desirable traits, making it a wonderful plant to enjoy as it changes during the season. I got to know this plant when I first started working in the nursery industry over 40 years ago. I was in college and during my first summer home, I worked at a nursery in Scituate, Massachusetts called Kennedy's Country Gardens. The owner of the nursery, Bob Kennedy, loved this plant, and every home he helped to design managed to have one. Enkianthus grows in the sun or the shade; it grows upright and narrow making it a perfect plant for small areas and flowers during June. In the sun, the bees love the flowers.</p>		<p align="center"><b>Tell your friends about Paul! Send them a copy of Paul's latest newsletter.</b></p>
<p>Enkianthus will grow 4 to 6 inches each year, sometimes more. The way it grows is interesting: 4 to 6 inches of smooth red stem and the foliage on the tip of the stem. The leaves are oval--nothing special--but arranged in a group like an umbrella on the tip of that stem. In late May, the flower buds develop under the leaves and open during June, lasting all month in your garden. The flowers are beautiful and resemble large lilies of the valley with creamy yellow, bell-shaped blooms with red veins running in stripes down the bell. Where the bell opens at the bottom of the flower, it is all red and the top of the bell is green. When in bloom, the plant has the appearance of small umbrellas sheltering clusters of colorful bells under them. It is not as showy as a rhododendron in full bloom but when it's in bloom you'll know it, and love the show it makes in your garden. You can also use the plant as an accent plant in a long perennial border or rock garden. Finding flowering shrubs for the shade can be difficult and a real challenge, but this one is a real find for your shady gardens.</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>Enkianthus will grow 6 to 10 feet tall, but can be pruned easily to control size and kept at any height you want. The plant will spread 3 to 4 feet wide when mature, but I have seen them wider, so prune to keep narrow. When you plant, be sure to condition the soil with compost or peat moss in the hole. Plants will do best if the soil is acidic, rich in organic matter, moist and well drained. When the landscaping crew at Kennedy's planted shrubs, all the plants had a handful or two of Milorganite fertilizer added to the hole and worked into the compost. This gave the roots a little push for better root development. Water weekly, for the first year right up</p>		<p><b>Your e-mail</b> [     ]</p>
		<p><b>Your name</b> [     ]</p>
		<p><b>Their e-mail</b> [     ]</p>
		<p><b>Their name</b> [     ]</p>
		<p align="right">[Send &gt;&gt;]</p>
		<p align="center"><b>Where can I find Paul on Sunday mornings?</b> <a href="#">Click here to find Paul Parent</a></p>

until the fall season. Enkianthus will do better if you cover the soil around the plant with 2 to 3 inches of bark mulch. This helps to keep the soil cooler during periods of high heat during the summer and once the ground freezes in the winter it stays frozen, preventing root damage.

In the fall, you will see changes happening to this plant and you will like it as the foliage changes from its blue-green color to yellow, then orange and finally to bright red. If the plant has more sun, it has more color, but in the shade it is less vibrant but still beautiful. Plant where azaleas, rhododendrons, mountain laurel and hollies are planted in your garden beds as they will require the same type of growing conditions. Fertilize with Holly-Tone or Acid Adoring fertilizer in the spring of the year.

When the plant begins to bloom, cut some of the long flower stems, place them in a vase of water and enjoy the flower in your home. As a cut flower, it will last for 2 to 3 weeks on the kitchen table when mixed with other flowers or all by itself.

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This summer, when you sit on your patio or deck, would you love to have a flowering shrub to look at that will bloom all summer long and attract butterflies and hummingbirds? Impossible you say, but there is such a shrub--the butterfly bush. If you have a sunny spot in your yard that is a bit protected from the winter winds, you're ready to plant. The butterfly bush will grow from five to ten feet tall and just as wide. You can prune to direct the size of the plant in your yard or just let it grow. This beautiful flowering shrub will grow in almost every yard. It adapts to your needs in the landscaping you planned for your yard. Use the plant in a perennial border, plant several in a row for a privacy hedge or place one on the corner of your deck to bring nature closer to you, as the butterflies will feed on its nectar all summer long. Did I tell you it is also fragrant and the plant will flower from June to first frost?

The butterfly bush is an old fashioned shrub once cherished for tranquility in the garden. The new cultivars have brought it back into style today and if you like flowering shrubs, this is the plant for your garden. The butterfly bush will grow with long arching branches much like the forsythia shrub does. The branches are slender and create a mounding look to the plant. The leaves are long and slender--4 to 8 inches long, and the color varies from gray-green to dark green in color, with a soft and silvery and soft underside. The leaves, which hold onto the plant well into the fall, do not have any fall color change.

The fragrant flowers develop in June and resemble miniature lilacs. The first flower can be as long as 10 inches long and last on the plant for 3 to 4 weeks. When they fade, prune them off and two side shoots will develop with blooms 6 to 8 inches long. Prune them off again when they fade and now the same branch will make 4 flowers 4 to 6 inches long. The more you clean the plant the more it will flower. Butterfly bush flowers come from white, pink, lavender, red and purple.

Butterfly bush will come in a pot, instead of dug from the ground, as the plants do not transplant well. When you plant it, do not try to move it around your yard; plant it and leave it alone. Plants do best in a well-drained soil that you can keep moist or a rich loam type soil. Plant the Butterfly Bush with compost and organic fertilizers. Water two times a week until established; it will take 2 to 3 months for the plant to be well rooted. When it gets hot, the plant will grow fast and requires more water. Once established, in the second year the plant will tolerate heat and drought conditions. If the plant can get a little shade at the end of the day, I have noticed more butterflies on the plant.

In the spring, cut the plant in half to encourage new growth, unless you want it to grow large for privacy hedges. All plants will require spring pruning to remove dead branches and cleaning of the plant after winter. Never prune this plant in the fall. Fertilize in spring only--never in the fall--or it will not begin to harden off the growth and prepare for the winter. The butterfly bush also will not tolerate wet soils or road salt so keep plants away from the side of the road. The best place to plant it is where you spend your summer relaxing. It is also a great plant to put near the vegetable garden, as the flowers will attract honey bees all season long. Having more bees near the garden means better pollination and more vegetables to harvest. The flowers come on long stems and make a great cut flower for the kitchen table, lasting a week or two. Plant one or two this spring and find out why the plant is called the butterfly bush--you will think that the plant is moving in your yard. Enjoy.

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In my many years of gardening, I have never grown eggplant. My father never grew it in his garden and our family ate everything that he grew, but never eggplant. When I think of eggplant, I think of it as a traditional Italian vegetable (you know -- Eggplant Parmesan?). But you'd probably have a hard time thinking of any other recipe that would use eggplant, right? Eggplant is an unusual looking vegetable, like a squash with a shiny smooth skin and no seeds inside. The traditional eggplant is black or purple---and I cannot think of any other vegetable that I have eaten that is black or purple. New hybrids are white, rosy-pink, lavender, and purple with white stripes. This still adds no appeal to my fresh picked vegetable plate.

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So I decided to research why my dad never grew eggplant and why we never ate it. My dad was French Canadian, a head chef for a gourmet restaurant in Scituate, Mass called P. J. Country House, for many years. He was written up in the Boston Globe by food critic Anthony Spinnazola for several recipes he developed using all types of fresh fish, a Canadian crepe stuffed with chicken and more.

The first sentence of one of my gardening books gave me a hint. "To grow eggplant you'll need to outwit pests, especially in the North, and protect the eggplant from the cold." That gives a quick answer, as we lived in Auburn, Maine and could never plant any warm climate vegetables until Memorial Day, if we were lucky. The next sentence said, "Eggplant will sulk in cold soils and long periods of chilly weather can injure plants, and frost ends their season." This plant called the eggplant was one vegetable that had no chance of growing in the family vegetable garden to start with, because of the weather requirements.

Here is a list of what you will need to do to grow eggplant in your garden. The soil should be fertile and well drained. Add additional organic matter such as compost or animal manure every year before planting the garden. Eggplant is a hungry plant; one inch of organic matter is REQUIRED. Pre-heat the soil with black-colored plastic mulch at least two weeks before planting the garden. Cut a hole in the black plastic mulch and insert plants. Because the plants are young and accustomed to a warm greenhouse, it would help plants adjust to the garden if you could place bricks or stones in a circle around each plant to help collect heat during the day and release it at night. You can also cover the plant with floating row cover cloth to help keep plants at 60 degrees if the weather should get cold. You could also grow the eggplants in pots, move them outside during the day and back inside at night. Are you kidding me--who has that much time on their hands?

Water plants regularly but never use overhead sprinklers. Wet foliage will allow disease and insects to spread more quickly, so add water directly to the ground, not on this fussy little plant! Fertilizer is required regularly, but be careful not to add too much Nitrogen or the plant will make a lot of leaves and little to no fruit. Fish emulsion is the best fertilizer when used every two weeks, or you can side dress every month with a balanced organic fertilizer.

Eggplant must be staked in the garden so fruit does not touch the ground, or it will flatten and lose its shape. Try cages to keep plants growing upright and prevent sunscald of the fruit, because the foliage shades the fruit preventing sunburn problems. If you want fine flavor from your eggplants, harvest them while they are small and young, about half grown. Shiny skin fruit is desirable; if the skin is dull it will be bitter and woody tasting. The plant has sharp spines on the stems so be sure to wear long sleeve shirts and gloves to harvest the fruit. Sharp spines sound dangerous to me just to harvest a few vegetables from the garden. Cut the stems with a sharp knife and be sure to leave one inch of stem attached to the stem to help keep the fruit from drying up before you use it. Eggplant, once cut from the garden, must be eaten within the week or it will go bad!

Another book recommended keeping the floating row cover cloth on the plant all year to help hold heat around the plant and keep bugs off the plant. Bugs love eggplants and if there is only one Colorado potato beetle in your entire garden, it will be on the eggplant. Flea beetles, aphids, tomato hornworms and many other bugs love this plant too.

My dad loved to work in the garden more than cooking, but this plant required too much time and work with little results. When he finished caring for the five of us kids, the garden was his refuge--but eggplant was more work than the five of us kids put together. Now potatoes--that's a vegetable! Grows fine in our Maine climate, little to no work, high return without all the fuss. Potatoes come baked, mashed, boiled and fried but not Parmesan--I like that. Plant potatoes and buy eggplant.

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#### **This Week's Question**

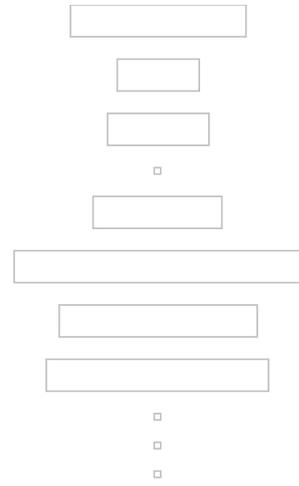
Who was the American plant breeder who developed over 800 strains and varieties of plants, including the Shasta daisy and freestone peach?

**This Week's Prize:**  
Liquid Plant THRIVE

**Soil Conditioner & Mycorrhizal Root Stimulator--perfect for seedlings and growing plants of all types.**

The hottest gardening product for 2012! From existing plants to seedlings--THRIVE helps plants get off on the right "root." The beginning is often the most important part of your plants' lives. Maintaining soil quality for them to grow is imperative. Liquid Plant THRIVE contains a concentrated dose of the microbes already found in nature that will ensure a strong root system, require less watering and help you do your part for the environment.

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**Last Week's Question:**

What is (usually) the best time of day to water your garden?

**Last Week's Winner:**

Mark Carchidi

**Last Week's Answer:**

Early morning (just before dawn).

**Last Week's Prize:**

Espoma 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
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- 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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## 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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