

**From:** Paul Parent Garden Club <newsletter@paulparentclub.com>  
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Edition 11.29	Paul Parent Garden Club News	July 21, 2011
	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Featured Quote:</b> "The world is mud-luscious and puddle-wonderful." ~e.e. cummings</p>	<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><b>Alpha Bio Systems - THRIVE</b></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>THRIVE products are a liquid blend of plant growth-promoting bacteria. They create a healthy, productive environment that is essential for superior plant growth and vitality.</p>		<p><b>Telephone:</b> (207) 985-6972 (800) 259-9231 (Sunday 6 AM to 10 AM)</p>
<p>The complex micro-organisms in THRIVE make it much more effective than products containing just mycorrhizae. THRIVE works from the roots up. The microbial activity introduced into the soil stimulates root growth, mass and length.</p>		<p><b>Fax:</b> (207) 985-6972</p>
<p>Thrive can be used with all types of fertilizers. In addition to enhancing the bioavailability of fertilizer and decaying organic matter, the bacteria in THRIVE colonize on the hair like structures of the plant root to increase nutrient absorption and stimulate growth. The result is more resilient and robust plants that are better able to withstand transplant stress, excessive heat and disease. Increased flowering and fruit bearing is also common.</p>		<p><b>Address:</b> Paul Parent Garden Club 2 Blueberry Pines Dr Kennebunk, ME 04043</p>
<p>THRIVE can be mixed with water or applied directly to the soil. THRIVE contains no fertilizer, herbicide or pesticide. THRIVE is safe to use around pets when used as directed and will not interfere with other treatments. The bacteria in THRIVE will remain viable between 35 and 120 degrees with as little as 18% soil moisture.</p>		<p><b>Regular Phone Hours:</b> Mon.-Sat. 8 AM to 6 PM Sunday: 10 AM to 6 PM</p>
<p>Click here for more information about <a href="#">THRIVE products</a>.</p>		<p style="text-align: center;"><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>
<p>The tropical hibiscus is the number one selling flowering plant grown in southern Florida and California for gardeners across the country. Hibiscus will grow only in a climate where temperatures seldom dip down below 40 degrees, as it is not frost-hardy. The plant will not flower if temperatures routinely drop below 50 degrees, so if you want hibiscus for your home or as a potted plant on your deck, it will require special care to grow. This magical plant is well worth all the work and effort you put into it for its unique flowers. Here are a few things to know about growing hibiscus plants where you live.</p>		<p><b>Have a Look Around Our Website:</b></p> 
<p>In the southern or western part of the country, the hibiscus plant is a woody shrub that is evergreen and flowers all year long. So all you have to do to grow this plant where you live is copy their climate and light conditions. First of all, let me tell you about this plant because it originated in tropical Asia and it was brought to this country by gardeners, who like you, loved its flowers.</p>		
<p>The foliage is dark green, and the leaf is shiny as long as it has enough water, but when the plants begins to dry out the shine will fade, making the foliage dull green. The leaf is oval, with large indentations or teeth on the edge of the leaf margin. The leaf will grow up to 6 inches in length, depending on sunshine, watering, and fertilization of the plant by you.</p>		
<p>The flower resembles a flared trumpet that will grow from 3 to 8 inches in diameter, depending on the variety you choose and how it is cared for, again: sunlight, water, and fertilizer. The flower colors will range from red, orange, yellow, and pink; you may also find many new hybrids with two or more colors on the same flower and many new, semi-double, double-flowering and ruffled hybrid varieties.</p>		
<p>The number one requirement is temperature, as the plant requires a warm location; after all it is a tropical plant. If you want lots of flowers, you will have to provide a location with temperatures that</p>		<p><b>Subscribe to our newsletter!</b></p> <p><a href="#">Click here to subscribe, unsubscribe or change your address.</a></p>

stay between 60 and 90 degrees all year. When you put the plant outside in early June and when you bring it back indoors in mid-September, expect the plant to lose leaves with the move. Even the slightest change will cause leaf drop, but the plant will quickly replace the fallen foliage.

As I said earlier, if the temperature drops below 50 degrees, the plant will stop flowering until it warms up again, so don't panic if that happens. Also expect that the flower size will decrease with cooler temperatures. In the middle of the winter, just keeping it alive is a challenge but I will help you. If you have the plant outside in a container on your deck for the summer and the forecast is for temperatures above the mid 90's, move the plant into the shade until the heat spell passes or the flower buds will drop due to the high heat.

Number two requirement is watering, as this plant requires a steady source of moisture, especially during the hot days of summer. Water the plant every day from June to September unless it rains, because the plant has a lot of foliage and flowers and they require lots of water. Never place the plant with a saucer under the pot as the soil needs to drain freely after watering. If you're away and it rains, the saucer will fill up with water quickly, forcing all the air out of the soil and root rot will quickly develop--killing the hibiscus. Always water according to the weather, less if it's cool and wet, and more if it's hot and dry.

To help hold water in the soil add Soil Moist Granules when repotting the plant. If it is a new plant for you, make several holes in the soil ball with a pencil 3/4 of the way down in the pot and add a good pinch of product in the hole. Soil Moist will retain 200 times its volume in moisture in the soil, so check direction to determine the amount needed for your container, and **never** use a container without drainage holes in the bottom. When the temperatures cool, cut back on the watering, as the plant will require less water and—again--wet roots will cause root rot!

Number three requirement is fertilizing the plant to keep it healthy and flowering. Because most of us are busy, we will forget to fertilize this plant so I encourage you to use a time-release fertilizer like Osmocote or Scotts Shake and Feed. During the summer months especially, the plant is growing fast and flowering heavily with the hot weather, so give the plant extra fertilizer every week; I like Fertilome's Blooming and Rooting with trace minerals or Miracle Gro 20-20-20 with minerals. If the plant stays well fed, the foliage will stay deep green and the plant will flower all year long.

Number four requirement is insect control, and on hibiscus you will have two insects--aphids and red spider mites--on the new foliage and on the flower buds. Both can be easily controlled with a systemic insecticide such as Tree and Shrub insecticide or Systemic Granules applied every 4 to 6 weeks. If problems develop, spray the plant with All Season Oil--a natural product that will smother the insects on the plant--and repeat applications 2 times, spaced 7 to 10 days apart. Always turn the plant upside down and spray under the foliage as well as on top of the leaf, as insects tend to hide under the leaf.

During the winter months, it's important to keep the plant as warm as possible at all time and ALWAYS avoid drafts. Hibiscus is a tropical plant that will do very well in a northern climate if you keep it warm--always above 60 degrees in your home. If the weather gets cold, especially at night, pull the plants away from the windows and move them to the center of the room to keep them warm. If your windows are a bit drafty, keep them back 3 feet from the glass on those cold and windy days. Keep plants away from doors that open and close often, so temperatures stay uniform and warm.

During the winter months, water as needed and keep plant moist but not wet. Poke your finger into the pot as deep as you can and feel for moisture. If it's moist, leave it alone as plants will do better indoors during the winter a bit on the dry side--but never let plants wilt. Always use warm water when watering the plant, never cold or you will chill the root system and hurt the roots, causing leaf drop.

Fertilize with time-release fertilizer when you bring the plant inside for the winter and repeat every 2 months. When the plant comes into bloom, also use a liquid food like Miracle-Gro every 2 weeks; food equals flowers! The more direct sunlight the plant receives, the more it will flower.

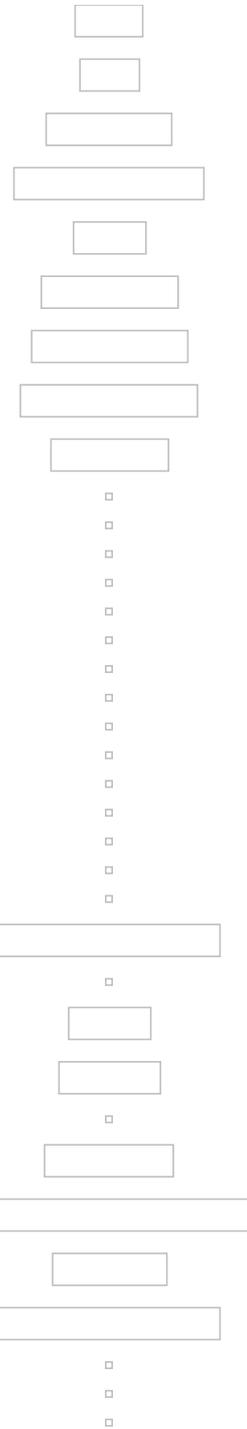
Every week spin the plant around so the front of the plant now faces inside the room and the back faces the window. This sequel sunshine will keep *all* the foliage on the plant, not just the foliage on the front of the plant. Once the plant is in place do not move it from its location or you will have additional leaf drop. It should stay there until spring arrives and you're ready to put it outside again.

One more thing, repot in the spring when you put the plant outside for the summer, as the plant will grow faster and need repotting. Increase the pot size by 2 inches when you change the pot size. Always use a good potting soil--never cheap stuff--or the roots will suffer and so will the plant, giving you fewer and smaller flowers.

Oh, yes, one more thing...pruning. Prune to control the size of the plant especially when you bring it indoors for the winter. Prune 1/3 of the branches every two weeks until all the branches have been all pruned, that way you do not lose your flowers and the buds. Pruning will stimulate growth; I also prune the plant when I put it outside in the summer the same way. Enjoy!

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WARNING! With the heat and humidity in the days to come, PLEASE keep a close eye on your garden for a "fungus among us," called powdery mildew. This is our worst fungus during the summer months, and it will move quickly on many plants in your yard and garden. Powdery mildew will begin as a white dust like covering on the leaves of your plants, especially if you



water your garden with overhead sprinklers--and especially if you do it late in the day. As powdery mildew spreads on your plant, it will block the sunlight from your foliage and the leaves will turn brown and black quickly dying. As the foliage dies, the plant is prevented from making fruit and flowers on the plant and your garden will quickly come to an end for the year.

Perennials will survive and so will shrubs and trees, but this is the time of the year that these plants are flowering and also the time when they make the flower buds for next year; without leaves, there will be no flowers on your plants next year. Fortunately this fungus is easily controlled if you prepare and act now. Note: annual flowers and vegetables in your garden only get one chance to produce but if this fungus attacks the plant they will slowly die and so will the dream of fresh vegetables and beautiful cut flowers.

Don't panic because now is the time to prevent this from happening and if you watch you watering practices and treat these plant everything will be all right. Here are the most likely plants to have a problem. Annuals include zinnias, impatiens, balsam, lobelia, bachelor buttons, and sunflowers. Perennials include bee balm, tall phlox, hollyhocks, delphinium, peonies, and Japanese lanterns. Vegetables include cucumbers, squash, pumpkins, tomatoes, beans, and peas. Shrubs include Exbury azaleas, lilacs, spirea, pyracantha, hydrangea, and shrub dogwoods. Trees include flowering crabapples, dogwood, mountain ash, and one last plant, the rose bushes. Treat them with a good fungicide such as: Serenade, Actinovate, Disease-B-Gon, copper fungicide, sulfur fungicide, or Fung-Onil.

Your perennials are growing like crazy right now, and if you can deadhead the faded flowers from the plant, many of your perennials will bloom again in just a few weeks. Some will continue to bloom right through the summer months if you remove the faded flowers so the plant cannot make seeds. Pick off the faded flowers from your hosta so the energy is sent to the foliage, making the plant larger and more colorful. Pick off the stems and seed pods from your daylilies so the seeds in the pods do not produce wild seeds or you will lose your hybrids with their wonderful colors and your plants will all turn orange like the wild plants.

If you keep cutting your daisy flowers like black-eyed Susans and coreopsis, they will become bushier; if you do not, they will reseed all over your garden and take over. You can allow the seed heads to dry up and ripen on the plant and then crush the pods to release the seeds and spread them over open fields or along the side of the road for your own wildflower garden.

Your lawn will need one inch of water per week to keep it green during these hot days. Water first thing in the morning before it gets hot out, and water less often but apply more water when you water. This will encourage the roots to chase the water down into the soil and not encourage them to grow up to the water and dry out faster. Raise the level of the lawn mower blade to the highest spot to keep the grass tall, because tall grass does not dry up as fast as short grass in your lawn--and mow your lawn less often if it gets hot and dry to keep it green and healthy.

Your vegetables are beginning to ripen quickly now, so pick in the garden often and when the vegetable is young and tender. Young vegetables like peas, beans, squash, cucumbers, and lettuce will taste much sweeter and any seeds in the vegetable will be smaller, making them easier for you to digest. Remove any overgrown vegetables as soon as you see them or your plants will stop producing because they are making seeds on the plant; great for the compost pile.

Go to your local garden center this week and pick up packets of vegetable seeds for a fall crop, because the seed companies will be collecting the seed packets for the end of the year. Seeds like bush beans, peas, lettuce, Swiss chard, beet greens, spinach and radishes can be planted next month for wonderful fall vegetables. If you want fall kale, cabbage, broccoli and cauliflower, you need to start those seedlings NOW and transplant in the garden in mid-August for October vegetables. Ask your garden center when their garlic sets are going to arrive, so you can plant them in your garden in the late summer for bigger garlic bulbs next summer.

Now that the heat is here, it is the best time of the year and most effective time to **KILL** poison ivy and poison oak growing around your home--again the best time! Use Round-up, Kills-All or Kleen-Up, on a nice day with temperatures 80 degrees or higher; apply early in the day for the best results so it can dry slowly on the foliage of the plant. Make sure there will be no showers in the forecast for at least 3 to 4 hours after you apply the product for the best results.

When it gets hot out and temperatures are expected to get higher than 85 degrees during the day, NEVER use pesticides or fungicides on your garden or the bright sun will burn the foliage of your plants and in some case kill them! If you have a problem and you must spray your plants, be sure to apply the product early in the morning, before 9:00 am, so the sun can dry the foliage early, before the day and the plants get hot!

Water your vegetable garden and flower garden early in the day so the water has a chance to move down into the ground before the sun has a chance to dry it up. Never water at night or you will increase the chances of disease problems in your garden and you will also attract insects to your garden. If you water during the heat of the day, more than half of the water you apply to the garden will dry up before it reaches the roots of the plant because of the hot sun.

Feed your containers and hanging baskets at least every 2 weeks, because the roots are stuck in the container and they have no way to leave the container to search for food needed to grow and stay healthy. A well-fed container at this time of the year will thrive and fill your life with wonderful color and vegetables. Also water often when the days get hot and dry because the plants are growing faster now than any other time of the year.

Keep weeding your gardens as the weeds continue to develop, because during this time of the year, many weeds are making seeds for next year's garden. Weed a little bit now or twice as much next year, it's up to you. If weeds and watering are problems, apply bark mulch or compost on these gardens after you clean them to prevent new weed problems and help hold moisture in the ground. You can also use a pre-emergent weed control product like Preem that will prevent new weeds from germinating in your garden.

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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:**

Honey bees are not native to the USA. Where did they come from?

[\*\*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**

Did you know that Maine has an official State Berry? What is it?

**Last Week's Winner:**

Sarah Heber

**Last Week's Answer:**

The Maine State Berry is the wild blueberry!

**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: Pasta Primavera

### What You'll Need:

- 1 pound fusilli, cooked and drained
- 2 cups fresh asparagus, diagonally cut into 1/2-inch pieces
- 1 cup fresh green peas
- 2 teaspoons olive oil
- Cooking spray
- 1 medium yellow bell pepper, cut into julienne strips
- 1 small red onion, thinly sliced
- 4 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 cups fresh cherry tomatoes, cut in half
- 1-1/4 cups chicken broth
- 2/3 cup whipping cream
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon crushed red pepper
- 1/2 cup grated fresh parmesan cheese
- 1/2 cup thinly sliced fresh basil

### Step by Step:

- Cook pasta according to package directions, adding asparagus and peas during the last 2 minutes of cooking.
- Drain and place in a large bowl.
- Heat oil in a large nonstick skillet coated with cooking spray over medium-high heat.
- Add bell pepper, onion and garlic; sauté for 5 minutes.
- Add tomatoes; sauté for 1 minute.
- Stir in broth, whipping cream, salt and red pepper; cook for 2 minutes or until thoroughly heated.
- Add tomato mixture to pasta mixture; toss to coat.
- Sprinkle with cheese and basil. Serve immediately.



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