

From: Paul Parent Garden Club <newsletter@paulparentclub.com>
Sent: Thursday, August 4, 2011 3:39 PM
To: rickmorin@earthlink.net
Subject: Paul Parent Garden Club News - August 4, 2011

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Edition 11.31	Paul Parent Garden Club News	August 4, 2011
	<p align="center">Featured Quote:</p> <p>"Don't wear perfume in the garden--unless you want to be pollinated by bees." ~Anne Raver</p> <p align="center"><input type="text"/></p>	<p align="center">Gifts for the Gardener</p> <p>Here are some great ideas for gifts your favorite gardener will just love!</p>
<p align="center">Bayer Advanced™ Complete Brand Insect Killer for Soil & Turf</p> <p>□ This product is a totally different way to control the insects that want to destroy your prized roses, flowers, other ornamental plants, and lawn.</p> <p>The unique two-way blend of insecticides controls current insect pest problems and prevents reinfestations for up to 30 days. The residual component is actually taken into the plant. Rain or water cannot wash off this internal protection! Insects are killed when they come into contact with the product or when they attempt to eat the plant.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Kills surface insects in 24 hours• Kills soil insects for up to 3 months• Kills the most common lawn pests, including: ants, fleas, ticks, European crane fly larvae, grubs, mole crickets and more <p>For more information, visit the Bayer website.</p> <p align="center"><input type="text"/></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 [] Your name [] Their e-mail [] Their name []</p> <p align="right">[Send >>]</p>
<p>I think that most all of us love butterflies flickering from plant to plant in our garden and there is no better plant than the butterfly weed plant to attract them into our garden. Can you say "monarch butterflies?" If you can, you will need to grow this wonderful flowering perennial plant in your garden. Butterfly weed is a wildflower and native to the Great Plains and prairies of our country. If Mother Nature can care for this plant in the wild, can you just imagine what you can do to this plant if you care for it properly in your garden?</p> <p>This plant is in the Milkweed family and produces great quantities of nectar for all types of butterflies and moths. The Milkweed family is the only plant to host the monarch butterfly--and the only plant that eggs are laid on to increase the population of this unique creature. The monarch butterfly has 4 generations to complete its life cycle and to migrate from Mexico or California to the northern parts of the U.S. and Canada and return back home again.</p> <p>The caterpillar will grow 1 to 2 inches long and has bands of white, black and orange on it. The butterfly will grow to have a wing span of 2 to 3 inches wide and, like the caterpillar, has bands of black and orange, with white spots on the edges of the wings. Monarch butterflies are considered the most beautiful in the world, the KING of butterflies, hence the name monarch!</p> <p>Monarch butterflies have 4 life cycles; the first 3 life cycles are alike, beginning with the egg, then larvae/caterpillar, change to pupa/chrysalis, and the adult butterfly. The adult butterfly will live for 2 to 6 weeks and continue flying north until it's time to start the next life cycle with egg laying; it then dies. The fourth generation of butterflies will follow the first three steps but this last generation will live for six to eight months until it's time to fly back home for the winter and start the whole cycle all over again. Now think how clever Mother Nature is, because it takes FOUR different butterflies to complete the cycle not the same butterfly to do it all. They cycle begins in</p>		<p align="center">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 align="center">Where can I find Paul on</p>

February in Mexico/California and they fly 3 to 5 thousand miles to complete the cycle in the Northern U.S. or Canada in September/October before they fly home and start all over again.

Now you know about the butterfly...so let me tell you more about the plant. The butterfly weed plant will grow 2 to 3 feet tall, depending on the variety, and spread to 2 feet wide. The plant will produce a white milky sap just like the common milkweed plant that is poisonous to most other insects, but unlike the common milkweed plant it is NOT INVASIVE. The common milkweed plant has clusters of dull pink flowers but the butterfly weed has bright orange, yellow, pink, red, and soft white flowers. These flowers come in 3 to 4 inch clusters of rounded buds that will open up to become a 5 petaled, star-shaped flower. The flower cluster will last on the plant for 6 weeks or more depending on the temperature. The flowers begin opening in early June to mid-July and will last on your plant until early August.

When the butterflies and bees pollinate the flowers while feeding on its rich nectar, a seed pod will develop on the flower cluster. The seed pod will be long and narrow, like a string bean but more inflated and growing upright on the plant. When the pod dries and matures it will crack open and just like the common milkweed plant, a small silken parachute will form so the wind can carry it out of your garden and establish new plants elsewhere in your yard or surrounding grass lands--they will even grow on the side of the road. When the pod dries, collect the seeds and plant them in your garden in August and they will sprout during mid-September. If you have a field near you, collect the seed and scatter them like Mother Nature does to create wonderful color and invite the butterflies into your yard and garden.

Plant butterfly weed in a sunny location for the best flowers and more foliage growth--but it will tolerate a bit of late day shade. Your soil should be well drained and average in texture but the plant will not tolerate a heavy soil or claylike soil. With heavy soil, the roots will rot during wet periods in the spring or icing during the winter months. You will not need a deep rich soil as the plant will do just as well in a 3 to 4 inch loam type soil or even a dry sandy soil that is fertile. The first year in your garden care for it like all other perennials by fertilizing regularly and watering as needed. Once the plant becomes established it will be drought tolerant.

The foliage is leathery, smooth, and shiny and it grows on strong growing upright stems. The leaves are long and narrow and cover the plant well, making it very thick, so do not worry if the caterpillars eat some of them--there are enough to support the flowers after they finish eating their share of the plant.

The plant has a tap root and does not do well when transplanted once it's established in your garden. Start plants from seed, or you can transplant young seedlings grown in pots or spring-sprouting seedlings that develop in your garden during early May. Your local garden center should have several colors available during the growing season. This plant has no serious disease or insect problems.

You can grow the butterfly weed in containers as long as the pots are well drained. When possible, store the container in a tool shed or garage if you live in a snowy climate, so ice will not kill the plant. A wildflower garden is wonderful but most of us do not have the space available to us, so plant in a perennial border with shorter plants in front and taller plants behind. Rock gardens are the perfect place, because these plants can tolerate the extra heat the stones will generate in the soil. They will do incredibly well on the side of a hill or near a sidewalk or house entrance that dries out easily. You can use them as a ground cover where the soil is not very good if you add a bit of organic matter to help get them started for the first year.

If you're looking to attract butterflies to your yard, this is the best plant as long as you do not spray pesticides on it!!! This is because the plants' foliage is eaten by the caterpillar to make the butterfly and the butterfly will get its nourishment from its flowers to grow and mature.

Plant butterfly weed around such perennial plants as cone flowers, coreopsis, rudbeckia, Russian sage, daylilies, Oriental lilies, or near your rose garden. Fertilize in the spring ONLY, and use a granular organic fertilizer like Flower-Tone or Dr. Earth Flower fertilizer with Probiotic. Over-fertilization will cause floppy growing branches and weak stems on the plant.

Butterfly weed/Asclepias is not related to the butterfly bush/ Buddleia and the caterpillars will not feed on their leaves, but they will drink the nectar from the butterfly bush. This is a wonderful plant and the unusual bright colors of the [flowers will draw your eye to the garden just like they do the butterflies and moths](#). Enjoy!

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With all the heat of the last month, you need to know about a perennial flower that loves the heat and will thrive in dry, sandy soil. The plant is called Russian sage but is not native to Russia; it's from Afghanistan. Until 1995 it was not a plant that most gardeners had in their gardens but the Perennial Plant Association named it the "Perennial of the Year" and today it is found everywhere. Let me tell you about this plant so you too will know the story of this wonderful perennial garden plant and why it was named the perennial of the year.

First of all, Russian sage is not in the Sage family of plants, it's actually in the Mint family--a close relative. The Genus name Perovskia was given to the plant after a Russian general, V.A. Perovsky (1794 to 1857), who was much admired by the Russian people. The plant can be found growing all over Russia today. The sage part of the name came because, like the mint plant, it has a pungent mint-like scent to it.

Let me tell you why you need to have this plant in your garden. The stems of the plant are gray-white to silver in color and they develop at the base of the plant, like wonderful outward-arching

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branches. The foliage is small, less than an inch long and narrow, needle-like but a unique fuzzy gray-green color. When the foliage stops growing the plant will make wonderful tall spikes of light blue flower spikes. Each flower spike will quickly develop many side shoots of spike flowers that will quickly cover all the foliage of the plant. The flowers come in clusters on these spikes and resemble tiny tubular blossoms that cover the plant, giving them the appearance of lavender blue to pale blue cloud.

The plant itself is woody looking, and also looks like a shrub, because it will grow 3 to 5 feet tall and 2 to 4 feet wide. If you want to control the height of the plant you can pinch the tips of every stem in the spring when the new growth reaches 12 to 15 inches tall. Each of these flower spikes can grow 2 to 3 feet tall on the plant. The flowers are long-lasting on the plant, usually lasting from June to September. If the blooms should end early, cut back the plant by removing all the faded flowers and one third of the foliage of the plant. Fertilize with a granular fertilizer like Flower-Tone or Dr. Earth Flower food with Pro Biotic and the plant will bloom again, lasting until the first hard frost in the fall.

Russian sage will grow best in a soil that is well drained; average to poor soil is best and never clay-like or heavy. This wonderful plant will tolerate a dry soil, sandy soils, acid soil, and open areas with a lot of wind like the seashore, making it the perfect plant to grow in a seaside garden or at a lake front garden where most plants fail. If your soils are heavy, make a raised flower bed or create a mound of soil to grow the plant on, as this will keep the crown of the plant and the roots out of the water especially during the winter months and early in the spring when the ground is wet.

Plant in a garden located in sunshine all day long for the best flowers on the plant. If you have a location that gets real hot during the summer and where watering can be a problem, this is the plant for you. If you plant in a partial shade or shade garden they will not do very well for you and will not flower. This is one plant for which conditioning the soil when planting is of little importance but you must keep the plant well watered the first year until it is well established and able to find its own water. Mulching around the plant is helpful in holding water in the soil during the growing season (along with weed control) but in cold climates like Northern New England mulch also helps to protect the root system.

In the fall, you can leave the plant as-is and enjoy the unique plumage-like winter branching or you can cut back the plant to 12 inches. This is a woody perennial and the new growth will develop on the branches that remain from the previous year's growth. New shoots do not develop from the base of the plant but from the woody branches.

In a cold climate, never cut back the plant right to the ground or it may not develop in the spring. If your climate is cold, be sure to build a mound of mulch 4 to 6 inches deep around the base of the plant to protect the plant just in case snow falls lightly to protect the plant from winter wind and frost heaves. The plant will tolerate temperatures that drop to minus 30 degrees when mulched in the fall.

You can plant Russian sage in containers like whiskey barrels as long as they have good drainage; you can also lift them off the ground with bricks or pot feet to encourage good drainage during wet weather and the winter when they freeze. If you're growing in clay or ceramic type pots, bring the pot into your tool shed or garage for the winter months and do not water until you move back outside in the spring; around March.

Put several plants in your cut flower garden for unique textures and the long flower spikes will be the most talked of among your fresh-picked bouquets on the dinner table. These flower spikes will outlast all of your cut flowers used in the arrangement. Blue is difficult to find in cut flowers and this flower will replace baby's breath or statice in your arrangement.

In a mixed border the Russian sage should be planted in the back of the garden or on the end of the bed, as the plant will get tall--3 to 5 feet. Give it room, as the flowers will develop from the ground up to the top of the plant. In a rock garden they will thrive with all the heat the rocks draw to the garden, and in a stone mulch garden they will outlast most plants in the garden.

I like the plant when planted in mass or in groups to create a splash of color in the planting bed for summer color. Mix with blue mophead type hydrangeas to create different textures in the garden. You can plant just one on the end of a fence to soften the hard surface, and if you live on a street with a rotary or traffic island, it will make the perfect maintenance-free plant; use instead of grass that needs watering and mowing. Create a garden on a slope or steep hill where mowing could be a problem or the soil is not very good.

You will like planting Russian sage in flower beds with daylilies, coreopsis, rudbeckia daisies, Oriental lilies, fall-flowering sedum and, in the late summer with an under planting of flowering cabbage or flowering kale for wonderful contrast. They will also flower at the same time as perennial hibiscus, rose of sharon, butterfly bush and all the new types of hydrangea--P.G. hybrids--for wonderful summer color near your swimming pool or patio. If you're spending a lot of time outdoors this summer, the Russian sage is the plant that will give you more color than any other perennial plant in your garden today.

Fertilize in the spring with a granular organic fertilizer, once a year and then forget it. Russian sage has no insect or disease problems to worry about and butterflies love this plant. Enjoy!

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August should be the most productive month in your vegetable and flower gardens, so be sure to visit them every day. Pick the vegetables while they are still young and tender, and do not forget

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to keep a vase full of flowers on the kitchen table and on your desk at work. Your summer type squashes like zucchini and various types of yellow squash will produce like crazy this month, so if you cannot eat it all give the surplus away to friends and neighbors, they will love it and you have just shown them YOU ARE A GARDENER. To quote my wife Chris, "I'm all grown up now and I have had enough squash this summer; I am not going to eat any more, so give it away." "Yes, Dear!"

Winter squash like Hubbard, acorn, and butternut are always slow to get started but this month they should produce many squash for you if you can keep watering the garden regularly and fertilizing every week or two with Miracle Gro or Blooming and Rooting water soluble fertilizer. August is not the time for slow release fertilizer; it's time to push the plants with fast acting plant food, the Blue Stuff. Winter squash is ready for harvest when the stem from the vine to the squash turns BROWN, not when its green, or it will not keep as long during the winter months.

Keep picking your green and yellow beans while they are small and the seeds are just beginning to become visible on the pods. When the plant is finished producing, do not pull it up; cut it at the soil line and leave the roots in the soil as they are covered with small nodules that are full of nitrogen that the plant made during the summer. By leaving those in the soil, future plantings will benefit from the fertilizer made by peas and beans. If you have open areas in your garden, plant new bean and pea seeds for a fall crop that will be ready in just 60 days--that's late September to early October--for fresh produce from your garden.

Broccoli will continue to form 1 to 3 inch florets of flowers that I think are better tasting than the big first head of flowers you picked in June. Pick often and store these small florets in a storage bag in the refrigerator until there is enough to eat for the family. If you get busy and the flower head begins to turn into yellow flowers, pick them and toss them into your compost pile. The more you pick, the more the plant will produce for you, as long as you water regularly and feed every week or two with the blue stuff. Broccoli will continue to produce for you right until early October if you water and feed the plants.

Pepper plants will continue to grow if you remove the mature peppers as they ripen from the plant. When the color is right, cut the pepper from the plant--never twist it off or you could damage the branch it is growing on, preventing future pepper production. Like every other vegetable, water and fertilizer applied regularly will mean extra vegetables at the end of the season. At the end of August, select the best pepper plant with the most fruit on it and dig it up from the garden to pot it up in a large pot to bring into the house for the winter. All you will need is a sliding glass door or south-facing window for the pepper plant to grow in front of for the winter. When flowers form on the plant inside your home tickle the flowers with a small artist's paintbrush and you will have fresh peppers all winter long. Then in the spring, plant it back in your garden.

August is a great month for tomatoes, so keep picking as they ripen and the plant will keep producing right up until frost. Mid-August pinch the tips off all the branches to stop the plant from growing larger.

This pinching will send the energy to the green tomatoes and help them grow larger and ripen faster. August is usually hot and dry, so be sure to water the plants regularly or you will begin to notice that the top of the tomatoes will begin to crack due to water stress in the plant.

If your tomatoes start to ripen too fast for you and you can't use them all right now, here is what I do with them. Wash them well under the faucet with cold water to clean them, and then place them in a freezer bag to go into your freezer until the cold days of winter come. All I do is take the tomatoes out of the freezer and drop them into a pot of slow boiling water to crack the skin of the tomato and remove it. You now have a wonderful base for fresh tomato soup, so just add vegetables and a bit of pasta to slow cook for those cold days. Your kitchen will smell wonderful and your family will love it.

Your onions will be ready as soon as the greens begin to flop over. Pull them out of the garden and let them dry out in the sunshine until the roots are all dried up and the stems begin to wither away. Cut the stems to one inch of the onion bulb and continue to dry until all the green that remains turns brown and store in your basement for the winter. If you should start to notice onions making flowers on top of the plant, pick those plants and use as soon as possible, as the plant is trying to make seed; it's all done growing and will not keep well over the winter.

Your cabbages are growing bigger every day now, so begin to pick them and use them while they are not too large. How much coleslaw can you eat at a time? Smaller is better, but cabbage will keep for several weeks in a cool basement or garage in the fall season.

When the weather begins to get cold, the Brussels sprouts will taste better so do not pick those until we have had a couple good frosts on the plant. If the plant freezes solid, do not worry, as the small sprouts will have even more flavor. I eat most of mine during October, November and...yes...in December! I dig them out of the snow and all I need is a bit of butter, salt and pepper and forget the beef--I'm happy.

Now is the time to plant fresh seed in your garden for fall vegetables. The following vegetables will have plenty of time to mature if you plant in the next couple of weeks: peas, beans, radishes, spinach, leaf lettuce, and Swiss chard. So fill in those empty spots where you have finished harvesting in the garden now with fall vegetables.

At the end of the month, you should be able to find fresh garlic bulbs for planting. Pull off the outside row of garlic cloves and plant them 3 inches deep; space them 6 inches apart in a soil that has been conditioned with compost or animal manure. They will grow to 6 to 8 inches tall before the ground freezes for the season and this fall planting of garlic will give you 2 to 4 inch garlic bulbs by late July next year. In New England and the Northeast you must start garlic in the fall if you want big bulbs the next year. Always use fresh garlic bulbs, NEVER grocery store bulbs, as they have been treated to not sprout while in storage. Also use the inner cloves of bulbs for garlic butter or cooking, as the outer cloves will produce better bulbs in your garden.

If you live near the seashore and go to the beach at the ocean be sure to bring an empty trash

bag with you to collect that wonderful seaweed that has washed ashore. Seaweed is better than peat moss for your garden because it is full of all the nutrition from the sea. Bring it home fresh for your compost pile, or just dry it out in the sun to spread over the garden. You're helping to clean the beach and condition your soil at the same time.

If you're picking flowers from the garden, the morning is best, because the plant is still cool and the flowers will adjust faster to a vase of water. Be sure that no foliage goes into the vase of water or it will speed up bacteria buildup in the water, shortening the time these flowers will stay fresh. If the weather gets hot inside your home be sure to add a few ice cubes to the vase each morning to cool down the flowers and they will last longer for you. Enjoy!

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A wonderfully fun edible flower video. [Check out this pizza, made with zucchini flowers and more!](#)



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:

Helianthus annuus is more commonly known as...?

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This Week's Prize: Dramm Bypass Pruner



- This Bypass Pruner with stainless steel blades is designed for garden and yard trimming. With non-slip rubber grips molded over a cast aluminum frame, it offers both strength and comfort. It has a 5/8-inch cutting capacity and a locking mechanism for safe storage.

Last Week's Question

In China, this fruit is a symbol of longevity (as is the tree that bears the fruit). What fruit is it?

Last Week's Winner:

Kurt Schatz

Last Week's Answer:

The peach and peach tree.

Last Week's Prize:

Drammatic® Gardens Ready-to-Spray 4-4-1

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:

Fruits-of-the-Forest Crumble



Fruit "crumbles" and "fools" are a New England tradition that stretches back to the 18th century. This **Fruits of the Forest Crumble** has a tart and satisfying taste, perfect for afternoon snacking or for finishing a hearty meal.

Ingredients:

- 2 cups brown sugar
- 2 cups flour
- 1 1/2 cup oatmeal
- 1 cup melted butter
- 1 cup water
- 3 1/2 cups sliced rhubarb
- 3 cups sliced peaches
- 2 cups sugar
- 1/4 cup cornstarch
- 2 cups blueberries
- 2 teaspoons vanilla
- 1/3 cup turbinado sugar *or* brown sugar, optional

Step by Step:

- In a medium size mixing bowl, combine brown sugar, flour, oatmeal, and melted butter.
- Divide flour-oatmeal-sugar mixture in two, pressing half into the bottom of an 8-9" square pan (reserving the rest).
- In a large saucepan, combine water, rhubarb, peaches, sugar and cornstarch; cook until clear.
- Removing pan from heat, fold in berries and vanilla.
- Carefully cover crust in the pan with fruit filling, using a spatula to even out the surface.
- Cover fruit filling with remaining crunch mixture, sprinkling with clean hands over the surface evenly. If desired, cover with a sprinkling of turbinado or brown sugar.
- Bake at 325° F for 40-45 minutes, until crumble is golden brown. Cool completely before serving.

Yield: 6 servings.

Recipe courtesy of "Cooking for Pleasure" by Jeanine Harsen.



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