


From: Paul Parent Garden Club <newsletter@paulparentclub.com>
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Edition 11.38	Paul Parent Garden Club News	September 22, 2011
	<p>Featured Quote:</p> <p>"A man should never plant a garden larger than his wife can take care of." ~T. H. Everett</p>	<p>Gifts for the Gardener</p> <p>Here are some great ideas for gifts your favorite gardener will just love!</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><input type="text"/></p> <h2 style="text-align: center;">BOBBEX-R Animal Repellent</h2> <p>This specially formulated spray is designed to stop smaller herbivores from eating ornamental and vegetable plants. Bobbex-R is effective in preventing rabbits, groundhogs, chipmunks, squirrels, and voles from devastating landscapes and gardens. Bobbex-R is environmentally compatible, using only natural ingredients that WILL NOT WASH OFF. Bobbex-R is recommended as a bulb-dip to deter underground damage after planting.</p> <p>Bobbex-R, a stronger formula of the original Bobbex Deer Repellent, protects against damage by the browsing of smaller four legged pesky herbivores that find the odor and taste of Bobbex-R spray extremely offensive.</p> <p>Bobbex-R is a year round product for all types of plantings, will not wash off during rain, irrigation or normal watering. It is environmentally compatible and harmless to humans, pets, birds and aquatic life, contains no petro-chemicals, and is made from natural and recycled ingredients. Bobbex-R is effective in protecting your plants from: rabbits, ground hogs, squirrels, chipmunks, and voles.</p> <p>To learn more, visit Bobbex.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><input type="text"/></p> <p>If I said to you: "don't cut the grass and use it for privacy, color, and the beautiful flower it makes," you will think I have lost my mind, right? After all if you do not cut the grass all year long, the neighbors would probably call the Landscape Police and force you to mow it. You would be right if I was talking about your lawn but have you ever thought of planting ornamental grass in your garden, in a large container instead of flowers, along a fence or making a special garden just for ornamental /decorative grasses?</p> <p>Ornamental grasses have wonderful arching vertical growth. The plant is graceful looking because of the foliage that moves with the slightest breeze. The plant grows in a clump that is dense but soft looking, even during the winter months when it turns brown and dies back to the ground. Ornamental grasses have a unique texture that will complement both needle and broadleaf evergreens. There is no annual or perennial flowering plant that can give your garden the character of ornamental grasses. Ornamental grass also produces wonderful looking plumes of color on top of the plant during August, changing color during September as the weather begins to cool off.</p> <p>Ornamental grasses are not eaten by deer or other wild animals that live near your garden. Insect pests and diseases are not a serious problem to these plants. The only maintenance you will need for this plant is cut it down to 4 to 6 inches from the ground in the early spring so the new foliage does not grow with the dead foliage from the previous year and spoil the foliage color. When planted near shrubs that make winter berries, your garden will have great winter character and color contrast. The plants are drought tolerant and they will also give your water gardens much character all season long.</p> <p>Ornamental grasses come in many different shades of green foliage, depending on the variety you select. If you want color...how about blue foliage? How about green and silver foliage, green and yellow foliage, even green and white foliage? The foliage can be a solid color or have vertical stripes or horizontal stripes on the blade of the grass. Most of the plants will turn red to purple in the fall before they turn brown when the snow begins to fall in December.</p> <p>The flowers of ornamental grasses are called "plumes" and the variety you select will determine the color, shape, and size of the plume. The plumes begin white in color but change to silver, pale</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>Regular Phone Hours: Mon.-Sat. 8 AM to 6 PM Sunday: 10 AM to 6 PM</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 []</p> <p>Your name []</p> <p>Their e-mail []</p> <p>Their name []</p> <p style="text-align: center;">[Send >>]</p> <p>Where can I find Paul on</p>

pink, wine-purple, reddish pink and even reddish brown in early September. If height is an issue for your garden, then you're in luck, because different plant varieties begin at 8 to 12 inches tall and will reach as tall as 5 to 8 feet tall. Some varieties stay small, spreading to 1 to 2 feet wide but other clump varieties can grow as wide as 4 to 6 feet.

You will also find non clumping varieties that spread with underground roots/runners and make wonderful erosion control plants. You can use them near a pond, a stream or even on the side of the road where road salt can be a problem, killing many other plants. If you remove suckers that develop around the base of the plant it will not become invasive in your garden but if you don't watch out it will take over your garden. The most aggressive grass is called "Variegated Ribbon Grass" (*Phalaris*).

Ornamental grasses are easy to grow, even for the beginner gardener. Just plant them in a sunny garden, but they will tolerate a bit of shade. Some varieties will also tolerate salt spray from the ocean and wind locations near a pond or lake. Soil type is not a problem because it will grow in any soil—even sandy soil like on Cape Cod or the heavy clay-like soil of northern Vermont and Maine. But if you can provide a well-drained, loamy soil that has been conditioned with animal manure, compost or peat moss before planting you will be in for a real treat.

A healthy well-kept plant will attract song birds during the fall and winter months for its seeds. While the plumes are in bloom, butterflies will frequent the plant from August to September, and at any time of the year you can cut the long stems of the plumes and use them in a fresh flower arrangement or cut and dry them for wonderful dry flower arrangements.

Grow the plant in your garden for 4 to 5 years and in the spring dig up the plant and chop it into 3 inch clumps; you have now divided them to make many new plants for your garden or friends and family. Keep the soil on the sweet side and lime every spring or fall for the best growth and fertilize every spring to help motivate the plant back from winter dormancy. I use Dr. Earth Shrub and tree fertilizer with Pro Biotic or Plant-Tone fertilizer in the spring to keep the foliage healthy and encourage the plant to produce lots of plumage in the late summer.

The best small clump ornamental grass with color is Dwarf Blue fescue/ *Festuca ovina var. glauca*

The best and hardiest tall growing ornamental grasses:

Miscanthus sinensis Gracillimus--Maiden Grass: green and white foliage - reddish pink plumes

Miscanthus sinensis 'Little Zebra' -- Dwarf Zebra Grass: green with yellow bands -wine purple plumes

Miscanthus sinensis 'Morning Light'--'Morning Light' Maiden Grass: green and white margins- pink plumes

Miscanthus sinensisPurpurascens Purple Maiden Grass: green to red orange in fall- silver plumes

Miscanthus sinensis Zebrinus-- Tall Zebra Grass: green with yellow bands- pinkish plumes

Miscanthus sinensis Variegatus-- Variegated Zebra Grass: green and white striped- pink plumes

The best of medium growing Ornamental grasses:

Pennisetum alopecuroides-- Fountain Grass: bright green foliage – reddish brown plumes

Pennisetum alopecuroides 'Hameln'—'Hameln' Fountain Grass: dark green foliage- creamy tan plumes

Pennisetum alopecuroides 'Little Bunny' – 'Little Bunny' Fountain Grass: green foliage with whitish plumes

Pennisetum alopecuroides Moudry--Black Flowering Fountain Grass: dark green foliage – dark purple plumes

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Did you know that September 26 is Johnny Appleseed's birthday? Yes, Johnny Appleseed did really exist and he is a native of New England, born in Leominster, Massachusetts in 1774. His real name was John Chapman and he did everything you heard about, including being a well-known gardener, pioneer nurseryman and, yes, apple tree planter. Johnny got his start at a young age working as an orchardist apprentice when only 13 years old. Apples are not native to America, and were brought here in the 1600 and 1700's by English settlers. Johnny's love for this special fruit drove him to plant seeds and trees as far west as Ohio, Illinois, and Indiana, so if you live between Massachusetts and Ohio, thank Johnny for your apples.

If you love fresh apples, now is the time to begin picking them. I thought I would give you some ideas of what to look for and how to handle them. First of all, always select apples that are firm, that have a clean skin and are free from bruises. Fresh native apples come in so many colors, it hard to determine when they are ready for picking by their color while on the tree. When you go apple picking always ask the farmer what types of apples are ready for picking that day. My wife, sister in law and I went apple picking last weekend and asked the farmer for his help and he gave us several additional tips.

Pick one apple from the row of apples you select and taste the variety you want to pick to see if the taste is what you want. We picked 7 different varieties of apples so I won't have to see the doctor for at least a week now--and I did eat most of the sample apples I picked that day. Next he told us to pick the apples on the tips of the branches first, as apples ripen from the outside of the tree towards the center. Now grab the apple with one hand and twist the apple off the branch by rolling the apple upwards of the branch and give it a good twist. Don't pull down on the apple or you will break part of the branch containing next year's flower buds, so the tree will be damaged and have less fruit on it.

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If two apples are growing together side by side, twist them in different directions and they will come off very easily. Do not climb on the tree, as this time of the year the branches are full of fruit and you will damage the branches with your weight. You could also fall from the tree--and that will not be fun, either. Never shake the branches of the tree, because you could damage the tree and many of the apples will fall to the ground and spoil. Nobody wants apples on the ground, right? Apples with a stem on them will keep longer when in storage so, twist--don't pull. And one last thing--*place* the apples in your bag; don't drop or throw them into your bag, as bruised apples will go bad faster.

When you get home, place the apples in a cool place like your basement or garage and they will keep longer. Warm rooms will make apples ripen faster and they will also spoil quicker, so keep them cool. Do not wash them until you're ready to eat or cook with them, as they have a protective coating on them that washing will remove. If you're storing your apples for winter use with squash, turnip, beets, and carrots, they will do very well together but keep potatoes away.

All vegetables give off ethylene gas while in storage but potatoes more so, and it will force the apples to go bad faster. Never keep apples near a flower arrangement because the gas they produce will put the flowers to sleep. My first year in college I took a floral design course and my college roommate put his lunch in the cooler with the flowers, unknown to my teacher. He forgot his lunch that contained an apple in the bag over the weekend, and on Monday when we went back to class most of the flowers had begun to go bad; no lunches ever went into the flower cooler again after that.

Here is a question for you: are apples apples and good for both eating and cooking? Actually, apples are broken down into 3 categories; eating, cooking and all-purpose apples. Eating apples typically have more sugar in them; they are larger in size, and the skin is thinner, softer, and easier to digest. They also do not store as well or as long in your basement.

Cooking apples have less sugar in them, they have more of a tart taste, they store well in your basement--and for a much longer time--they have a thick and strong skin to help hold moisture in them and the flesh of the apple is less likely to get soft when cooking. Nobody likes a mushy apple pie!

All-purpose apples are good for both fresh eating and cooking/baking. Use early apples for cooking while still firm or they will not hold up. Here is what I picked last week and why.

Cortland: An all-purpose apple with good red coloration. They have a crispy, juicy, sweet and tart taste to them, are a good firm apple for cooking apple pies, desserts, fresh eating, long keeping in the basement, and great in tossed salads or with mixed fruit because they do not turn brown quickly like many apples.

Crispen: An all-purpose apple with great golden yellow skin, super crispy, very juicy, very sweet and refreshing to eat when fresh picked, great for cooking, baking and roasting in the oven, long keeper in cool basement, great for salads, used for cider and the best apple for hard ciders.

Gala: An all-purpose apple with a wonderful bright rosy- red skin with many lines and shades of red on the skin, just beautiful to look at, firm, very sweet, crisp with a good snap to it, very juicy when eaten fresh--so have a napkin when eating it. The size of the apple is small--great for young children with no waste; also great for pies and pastries.

Ginger Gold: An all-purpose apple with beautiful deep gold skin, great for fresh eating, wonderful for pies and pastries, it does not keep well, so use it up and mix other types of apples in pies for wonderful flavor; it does also have a hint of spice to its taste, unusual and great with white wine and cheese during September. Keep refrigerated until you eat them. These may be hard to find.

Honey Crisp: An all-purpose apple, the skin of the apple is filled with gold and red blotches and it looks delicious, a well-balanced sweet and tart taste to it, crisp, juicy, great for cooking all types of pastries, keeps well in a cool basement, great fresh eating apple with a glass of white wine and cheese, salads.

Macoun: Great eating apple, small to medium in size, great for children, beautiful wine red skin on the apple, nice and crispy, juicy, sweet and tart tasting at the same time, also wonderful for pies and baking, keeps well in a cool basement, great with other fruits in a fruit salad.

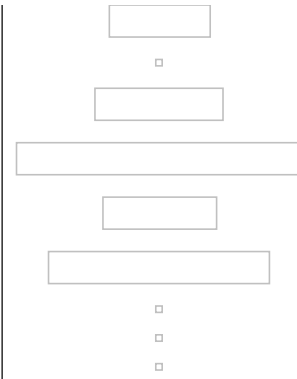
Northern Spy: A very large apple, crispy almost hard, beautiful red and yellow streaking skin, all-purpose apple great for fresh eating, wonderful for pies and pastries and stays firm when cooked, juicy, sweet and tart flavor, the best winter keeper apple for a cool basement, easy to peel, late to ripen

Now go apple picking this weekend while the weather is good, buy some apple cider, pumpkins, Indian corn and a bunch of corn stalks to decorate the front of your home. Celebrate Johnny Appleseed's birthday this weekend. After all, if it was not for him, you would be eating plums instead of apples this weekend. Enjoy!!!

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The days are definitely getting shorter now, the days are a bit cooler--also the nighttime--but the days are beautiful, and this is my favorite season of the year. We all know what comes after fall, and for some of us it's not our favorite season, so let's enjoy the next 10 weeks in our yard and gardens. This cool weather is perfect to do a lot of work around the yard...you know, the things we let go by because of the heat of summer. So put on your jeans and let's get back to working in the garden.



My Dad always said that "fall is for cleaning, by preparing the gardens for winter and getting the garden ready for next spring." Here is what we did in September to prepare for the winter and next year's garden. The first thing we did was to clean out the tool shed and the garage. A quick cleaning before you fill them with the garden equipment, with left over products like fertilizer, insect and disease control products and with all the patio furniture.

The rototiller was washed, the oil was changed, and the gas was treated with a preservative to keep it from going bad during the winter. It was put in the back of the garage to be out of the way, and the 4 snow shovels were placed in front of it. Just a reminder that they were ready for my 2 brothers and me to help him shovel the driveway; in those days, snow blowers were not necessary when you had three sons.

Next, it was time to clean the vegetable and flower gardens. All plants that were finished producing were pulled up and placed into the compost pile. The garden was raked and cleaned, and the soil was prepared for next year with an application of limestone and several pickup truck loads of chicken manure from a friend's farm. It was always fun spreading chicken manure on a nice fall day and watching all the neighbors close the windows. But a quick watering did help to calm down this wonderful gardening fragrance, OH YEAH...and it still brings back wonderful memories of working in the garden with my Dad.

All the annual flowers that looked so tired were removed from the garden. The perennial garden was also cleaned and the plants were cut back to remove the yellowing and dying foliage. My Dad always believed that if we removed the tired plants and dead foliage that we were preventing problems for the following year and, yes, he was right. Insects and disease know that cooler weather means the end of their life cycle, and to continue their future they must lay eggs on that dying foliage. Diseases make spores for next year also. If you clean the garden this fall, you will have fewer problems next year. Then we limed these gardens and added chicken manure to keep those microbes well-fed during the winter.

Next, we cleaned the berry plants and my father removed the old canes of the raspberries that had produced so well that year. "Remove the old to make room for the new canes that will come next spring," he said--and he was so right, because if you do not remove the canes that produced this year, they will only make foliage for you next year, taking energy from the new ones. Clean the area around the plants, add limestone and, yes, that wonderful chicken manure. I think I still have scratches on my arms from cleaning those raspberries...but it was all worth the effort when those fresh berries were ready for picking.

Blueberries were mulched for the winter for extra protection against the cold and we added aluminum sulfate to help keep the soil around the plant more acidic, as blueberries do much better in acid soil. Pruning was done in the spring, never in the fall. The strawberries were cleaned of weeds around them and a fresh layer of straw was added for winter protection, and a bit of limestone to keep the soil sweet. Before we placed the mulch and straw around the plants, Dad always made sure we used the chicken manure around the plants. It was never a problem to get us kids into the bathtub after helping my father with his fall clean up.

We had several fruit trees in the back of the yard until a hurricane came through one year in the late Fifties and destroyed them because they were full of fruit, and the tree broke apart very easily with all the weight on the branches. But when we had when we had those trees, we made sure that fallen fruit was cleaned weekly every fall to prevent yellow jackets and wasps from stinging us kids. My mother made many pies and jams with what was left after the five of us kids ate our share from the trees.

We moved to the climbing roses and tied them up for the winter, then mulched around them for extra protection. Shrub roses were cleaned, mulched, and sprayed for overwintering insects and diseases. Remember to never prune roses in the fall, always in the spring when the Red Sox play baseball for real at Fenway Park in Boston. Maybe that is the problem with the Red Sox now; they think September is fall training and it does not count!

The lawn was last, because it was still growing and it would need several more cuttings before November got here. But we did add lots of limestone and I can still remember looking at my shoes when the job was done because they were really white and I had to wash them and polish them before going to school on Monday.

We did use a bag lawn fertilizer from the nursery in the fall to help keep it thick until the ground froze, but in the spring I can still remember spreading chicken manure all over the lawn. My two brothers and I looked like bank robbers with our red bandanas wrapped across our mouths and noses to help keep the smell and taste of the chicken manure away. Today it's funny--but back then it was no joke.

When all the work was done we applied linseed oil to the wooden handles of the tools to keep them from drying out and keep them strong. The metal parts of the tools were scraped with a wire brush and treated with some oil used in the car to prevent rusting during the winter.

When the grass was cut for the last time, we cleaned the lawn mower and sprayed oil on the blades. Yes, I said "blades," because we had a push lawn mower and we kids supplied the power. And today kids complain about cutting the lawn with a self-propelled mower; yes, life is tough. When all the work was done everyone got cleaned up and freed of the manure fragrance. We were all treated to ice cream and fresh apple cider, then given pumpkins, corn stalks, and mums to plant and decorate the house and the garden we just cleaned.

My mother picked out spring-flowering bulbs to plant for the next weekend and my father bought a couple extra bamboo rakes so us kids could help him rake those leaves that would soon fall all over the yard. Raking leaves was always fun because us kids got to play in those massive piles of leaves for several weeks until my Dad burned them in the garden. I still remember the smell of the leaves as I lay in the large pile and played. But what I miss most is the smell of burning leaves in the fall, how about you? Get out in the garden this weekend and enjoy the fall season in your yard.

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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.

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- 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:

What would you call the offspring of a female tiger and a male lion?

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This Week's Prize:

Bug Beater® Stink Bug Trap by Bonide Lawn and Garden

Protects homes and gardens from the "population explosion" of stink bugs around the country.

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Last Week's Question

An epiphytic plant (or epiphyte) grows on _____?

Last Week's Winner:

Mickey Parente

Last Week's Answer:

It grows nonparasitically upon another plant or on a nonliving support and derives nutrients and moisture from the air and rainfall.

Last Week's Prize:

Bug Beater® Stink Bug Trap

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

Coconut Curry Tofu



What You'll Need:

- 2 bunches green onions
- 1 (14 ounce) can light coconut milk
- 1/4 cup soy sauce, divided
- 1/2 teaspoon brown sugar
- 1 1/2 teaspoons curry powder
- 1 teaspoon minced fresh ginger
- 2 teaspoons chili paste
- 1 pound firm tofu, cut into 3/4 inch cubes
- 4 roma (plum) tomatoes, chopped
- 1 yellow bell pepper, thinly sliced
- 4 ounces fresh mushrooms, chopped
- 1/4 cup chopped fresh basil
- 4 cups chopped bok choy
- salt to taste

Step by Step:

- Remove white parts of green onions, and finely chop.
- Chop green parts of green onions into 2" pieces.
- In a large heavy skillet over medium heat, mix coconut milk, 3 tablespoons soy sauce, brown sugar, curry powder, ginger, and chili paste.
- Bring to a boil.
- Stir tofu, tomatoes, yellow pepper, mushrooms, and the white parts of the green onions into the skillet. (Don't use the green parts of the onions yet.)
- Cover, and cook 5 minutes, stirring occasionally.
- Mix in basil and bok choy.
- Season with salt and remaining soy sauce.

• Continue cooking 5 minutes, or until vegetables are tender but crisp.

• Garnish with the 2" pieces of green onion.

Yield: 6 servings



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