

From: Paul Parent Garden Club <newsletter@paulparentclub.com>
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To: rickmorin@earthlink.net
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Edition 10.43	Paul Parent Garden Club News	October 28, 2010
	<p>Featured Quote:</p> <p>"Bittersweet October. The mellow, messy, leaf-kicking, perfect pause between the opposing miseries of summer and winter." ~ Carol Bishop Hips</p>	<p>Gifts for the Gardener</p> <p>Here are some great ideas for gifts your favorite gardener will just love!</p>
		<p>Contact Information:</p>
<p>Wilt-Pruf®</p>		<p>E-Mail: Click to contact us.</p>
<p>Excessive moisture loss in plants causes stress, shock, wilting and plant failure. It strikes when the plant roots are disturbed during transplanting, or during periods of drought. It also occurs in winter when drying winds and frozen ground deprive plants of their natural moisture intake.</p>		<p>Telephone: (207) 985-6972 (800) 259-9231 (Sunday 6 AM to 10 AM)</p>
<p>Wilt-Pruf® acts as a protective coating, holding in moisture on plant foliage and stems, substantially reducing water loss during periods of plant stress. Wilt-Pruf spray dries to form a clear, colorless, flexible, gloss film without interfering with plant growth or materially affecting respiration, osmosis, or photosynthesis.</p>		<p>Fax: (207) 985-6972</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Protects against cold drying winds of winter and hot drying winds of summer.• Protects plants when roots are frozen in the winter, depriving them of their normal moisture intake, as well as during periods of drought.• Protects tender transplants while their root systems are developing. Tubers and bulbs do better in storage when first sprayed or dipped with Wilt-Pruf.• Protects and extends the life of Christmas trees and wreaths by reducing moisture loss which results in needle drop and browning.		<p>Address: Paul Parent Garden Club 2 Blueberry Pines Dr Kennebunk, ME 04043</p> <p>Phone Hours: Monday-Saturday 8 AM to 6 PM Sunday: 10 AM to 6 PM</p>
<p>Wilt-Pruf is a natural product derived from the resin of the pine tree. Wilt-Pruf is organic, biodegradable, non-hazardous, and is non-toxic to eyes and skin.</p>		<p>Where can I find Paul on Sunday mornings?</p>
<p>Broadleaf evergreens have a natural ability to survive when normal water intake through the root system is curtailed, such as in the winter when the ground is frozen, or during drought. But if the plants have been recently transplanted, they may not have enough moisture built up in their foliage to survive long periods without absorbing water. Wilt-Pruf gives them added protection to see them through - as well as protecting established plants against long or severe periods of water stress. Unseen wind barriers may also be eliminated by protecting these plants with Wilt-Pruf instead.</p>		<p>Click here to find Paul Parent Garden Club™ radio stations.</p>
<p>You can check the Wilt-Pruf site for more details and instructions for use.</p>		<p>A Customized Gardening Tour of Ireland</p>
		<p>Join us for a journey to the beautiful gardens of the Emerald Isle.</p> <p>Click here for more information.</p>
		<p>Have a Look Around Our Website:</p> 

Many years ago, on a crisp fall morning of exploration, I found a planting of white berries growing on a very steep hillside. I was thirteen and just beginning to find my love for plants. This plant was one I had never seen before. I carefully picked a small branch tip with leaves and berries on it and quickly took it home to show my mother. We took out the book of native plants of Maine, looked carefully for this plant and--to our surprise--we found it; it was the snowberry.

My mother and I walked back to the area where I found it growing so she could see the plant for herself. To our surprise, we met the man who had planted them on the steep slope to help hold back the soil and prevent erosion. He told us he had planted several snowberry plants many years ago and they were highly recommended by a local nurseryman.

Snowberry would grow in the shade and would spread quickly to hold back the soil on his hill. Snowberry spreads quickly with suckers; he told us to come back in the spring and he would give us some to plant for our yard. We did and the snowberry became a wonderful part of fall color in our yard.

The snowberry will grow 3 to 6 feet tall and wide. The plant will grow bushy, with a rounded shape. It grows upright shoots that will droop over with the weight of the berries. When the foliage has developed, the plant is dense looking and filled with slim twigs that give the plant a solid mat appearance. The foliage looks like a miniature oak leaf, 1 to 2 inches long, dark blue-green, with no fall color. The flowers are pale pink and not very showy. However, the fruit is spectacular and deserves your attention.

The fruit is bright white, has a shiny skin and the center of the berry feels like popcorn. The berries grow to 1/2 inch in diameter and on the bottom of the berry are the remains of the flower, making the berry look much like the shape of a blueberry. These white berries grow in clusters on the tip of the branches and their weight makes the branches weep.

The fruits form during the summer and color up in late August, lasting well into November. If the weather does not get too cold, it will last through December, but cold weather with ice will turn the fruit brown and it will then fall apart quickly. The snowberry fruit is not eaten by the birds, but these beautiful fruit are enjoyed in the fall for their wonderful color.

Plant snowberry in the spring. I would suggest that you talk to your local Garden Center or Nursery to order them for you, as they are not readily available. The snowberry plant is an old-fashioned plant introduced to gardeners in 1879 and not readily available today but many plant catalogs that you get in the mail in the spring sell them. The plant will grow in most soils, even clay-type--as long as you lime the soil regularly to prevent acidity.

Plants will grow in full sun to moderate shade. Once the plant is well established, it will produce many suckers every year, which can easily be transplanted the following spring. If you have a steep slope, plant 3 feet apart in staggered rows and watch the plants fill in quickly--usually in just 3 years.

The better you condition the soil when planting, the faster the plant will get established and begin to produce suckers. Compost and animal manure will do a great job. If the soil is sandy be sure to use Soil Moist to help hold water in the soil on steep banks. This plant is great to prevent accidents where mowing is a problem.

Prune in the spring to control size and stimulate new growth that will produce many berries. Fertilize with Plant-Tone in the spring when you prune the plant or in Early May. The plant is very hardy, and it will grow from Nova Scotia to Virginia, where it is a native plant. If you're looking for a good hybrid with large fruit, and more fruit on the plant, ask for *Symphoricarpos albus v. laevigatus*.

The leaves have begun to fall from our shrubs and trees and now those leaves are very colorful but soon these colorful plants will look barren. For the next several months, our landscape will look drab with gray or brown tree trunks, branches and stems, but there are plants that actually look better when the foliage falls from the plant.

My favorite shrub is large-growing and will thrive in a moist to wet soil--even boggy. During the fall and early winter it will be the talk of your garden. Most of us know it as winterberry and we have seen it growing on the side of the road where water seems to collect, boggy areas where in the spring you can find pussy willows growing wild, and on the edge of ponds and lakes.

This plant--the winterberry--is in the Holly family and known as *Ilex verticillata*, just in case you go looking for it at your favorite nursery. The first thing you should know about this plant is that it will drop all its foliage during October; that is called a deciduous plant.

The beautiful holly plants we are accustomed to growing in our yard are evergreen, and we adore them for the beautiful dark green foliage as well as the fruit. This plant is hardier than many of our evergreens, as it will grow from Canada to South Carolina and tolerate winter temperatures to minus 30 to 40 degrees below zero. If you're looking for a plant to add to your landscape that will give your property a natural appearance and require no maintenance from you, this is your plant.

Winterberry will grow 6 to 8 feet tall and just as wide, but some of the new hybrids will stay smaller, without pruning, about 3 to 5 feet tall and wide. The plant will grow oval to round, with a dense growing habit of branches that are fine and twiggy looking. Branches are dark gray and smooth looking but, grow with an unruly appearance, twisting and turning in all directions.

The leaves are one and half to three inches long, oval and, unlike the evergreen varieties, has no

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sharp thorns on the edges of the leaf. The foliage is dark green, shiny and has visible lines or veins running thru the top of the leaf. In the fall, the leaf changes to yellow-purple before falling from the plant.

In the spring, white flowers will develop on the new growth. These flowers are white, made up of five petals arranged in a circle with an indented center like a small trumpet. The flower is 1/4 inch wide and forms in a cluster, all around the stem of the plant, on the tip of the branches and before the leaves develop.

If you have grown holly before, you will know that unlike most plants, the holly needs male and female plants to make fruit; this is also true with this variety of holly. Only female plants make fruit, but both male and female plants make flowers and you need both to have fruit on your plants. Now the good news, all you need is one male for every 5 female plants to make berries in your garden, so purchase large female plants and smaller male plants for more fruit in your yard.

Choose a sunny location with fertile soil that is moist and acid. Plant with compost and fertilize every spring with Holly-Tone or Acid -Adoring fertilizer. The winterberry will look great all by itself but in groups or mass plantings it will be eye catching all fall and early winter. When the snow begins to fall make sure there is a plant nearby so you can enjoy the red fruit that covers this plant when the ground is covered with white snow.

The birds love the 1/4 inch red fruit and will feast on them in February. It is not too late to plant now, as these plants are very hardy. Winterberry produces the same red berries you will see at your local garden center or nursery this winter, cut into bunches to be used to decorate for the Christmas holidays. Winterberry is truly a wonderful plant for all seasons--enjoy.



It's time to put the berry garden to bed for the season, a time to collect our thoughts of what we did to these plants and what they produced for us. Last week I drove by a "Pick your Own Strawberries" field and noticed that they were covering the berry beds with two inches of straw. I pulled in to the berry fields and talked to the workers, to find out that the fall is the best time to prepare the bed for the year.

Applying fresh straw in the fall helps to protect the berry plants from cold and snowless winter winds, as snow acts as a blanket of insulation to protect the plants. Straw, not HAY, is used to keep weeds out of the strawberry bed during the year; it helps warm the soil in the early spring to wake up the plants and get them growing. Straw also keeps the berries clean, as they are off the ground and slugs are less of a problem. When the workers finished, they were planning to apply limestone to the entire growing area to help keep the soil on the neutral side--remember neutral soils have less weeds growing in them.

In the spring, the strawberry plants will poke through the straw and begin to grow on top of the fall layer of straw, which also helps with air movement around the plant to help prevent possible rotting of the berries and speed up ripening. In the spring, just add a bit of fertilizer and the plant is ready to produce. Use a fertilizer like Garden Tone first thing in the spring and again in early summer, after picking the berries, to help the new developing plants for next year's crop. All you will have to do now is keep the birds out of the garden and enjoy the berries.

In the blueberry garden, it is time to clean all the fallen leaves from around the plant and add them to the compost pile. When the garden is clean, add a two-inch thick layer of pine needles, straw, salt marsh hay, or pine bark mulch around the plants and in between the rows of plants. This layer of organic matter will insulate the roots of the plant during the winter, keep them cooler during the hot days of summer and control weeds in the garden.

I like to fertilize these plants spring and fall with Holly-Tone fertilizer, and I add aluminum sulfate in the spring and fall to help keep the acidity level high in the soil. Aluminum sulfate will lower the pH of the soil, helping plants achieve their goal of high crop production. Also use it on blue hydrangea spring and fall to keep the flowers blue.

Once the garden is ready for the winter, I always apply All Season Oil and Copper Sulfate Fungicide to the entire garden. This will help destroy any insect eggs or disease spores left on the plant by insects and disease from this year. I also reapply both of these natural products again in April, so I will have few if any problems with the garden. In the spring, when I notice that the buds are beginning to swell, I apply my fertilizer to help the flower and leaf buds develop properly.

Strawberries are most productive the second and third year in the garden. The first season in the garden is to help establish the plants. At the end of the third, dig up the berry bed and replant for next year. Blueberries are a real long-time crop that will last 25 years or more in your garden. With proper care, the plants will continue to grow, increasing production each and every year. So be sure to condition the soil when planting with compost and animal manure, mulch yearly, feed regularly and keep the soil on the acid side.

Most insect and disease problems can be controlled with the application of a general purpose fruit tree spray; follow the recommendations on the package to develop a spray program for your garden. The flavor of fresh-picked berries is far better than store-bought--and so is the nutritional level in the berries. Enjoy!

Join Paul Parent for a garden tour of the Emerald Isle!

Tour includes the Cliffs of Moher, Connemara National Park, Brigit's Garden, Muckross Gardens, Bantry House & Gardens, Kilravock Garden, Garnish Island, Annes Grove Garden, Lakemount Gardens, Waterford Crystal Visitor Centre, Heywood Gardens, Powerscourt Gardens, Dublin Castle, Dillon Gardens and much more.

[Click here for details.](#)

This Week's Question:

If you were decorating for Halloween with plants, why might you want a Tacca chantrieri?

This Week's Prize:

Espoma Organic Potting Mix

- Contains Myco-tone® mycorrhizae
- For all indoor and outdoor containers.
- In 4, 8, 16 qt., 1 and 2 cu. ft. bags.

[Click Here to Answer](#)

Last Week's Question:

If you were decorating for Halloween with plants, why might you want a Tacca chantrieri?

Last Week's Winner:

Deborah Marceau

Last Week's Answer:

Because the plant resembles a bat! It's also known as: black bat flower, bathead lily, cat's whiskers and devil's flower. (Ed. note: it's a pretty spooky-looking plant. [Click here for a picture.](#))

Last Week's Prize:

Espoma Organic Potting 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: Pumpkin Muffins

What you need:

- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/2 cup whole wheat flour
- 1/2 cup granulated sugar
- 1/2 cup packed brown sugar
- 1-1/4 teaspoons pumpkin pie spice
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/4 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup canned pumpkin
- 1/2 cup fat-free buttermilk
- 1/2 cup egg substitute
- 1/4 cup canola oil
- 1/4 cup applesauce
- Cooking spray

Step by Step:

Preheat oven to 375°F.

Combine flours, granulated sugar, brown sugar, pumpkin-pie spice, baking soda, baking powder and salt in a large bowl, stirring with a whisk.

Combine pumpkin, buttermilk, egg substitute, canola oil and applesauce in a medium bowl, stirring with a whisk. Add pumpkin mixture to flour mixture, stirring just until moist. Spoon batter into 16 muffin cups coated with cooking spray.

Bake at 375°F for 20 minutes or until muffins spring back when touched in center.

Cool muffins for 5 minutes on a wire rack; remove muffins and cool completely on a wire rack.

Yield: 16 muffins



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