

From: Paul Parent Garden Club <newsletter@paulparentclub.com>
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Edition 12.42	Paul Parent Garden Club News	October 18, 2012
 <p data-bbox="571 495 774 521">Featured Quote:</p> <p data-bbox="344 530 887 577">"Despite the gardener's best intentions, Nature will improvise." ~Michael P. Garafalo</p> <div data-bbox="464 685 746 719" style="border: 1px solid black; height: 15px; width: 177px; margin: 10px auto;"></div> <p data-bbox="197 763 999 864">The leaves have begun to fall from shrubs and trees. 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.</p> <p data-bbox="197 880 1010 1003">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.</p> <p data-bbox="197 1019 1015 1093">This plant--the winterberry--is in the Holly family and known as <i>Ilex verticillata</i>, 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.</p> <p data-bbox="197 1108 1015 1261">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.</p> <p data-bbox="197 1276 1010 1400">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 they grow with an unruly appearance, twisting and turning in all directions.</p> <p data-bbox="197 1415 1010 1516">The leaves are one and half to three inches long, oval and, unlike the evergreen varieties, there are no sharp thorns on the edges of the leaf. The foliage is dark green and shiny, with visible lines or veins running through the top of the leaf. In the fall, the leaf changes to yellow-purple before falling from the plant.</p> <p data-bbox="197 1532 1015 1632">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.</p> <p data-bbox="197 1648 1015 1800">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.</p> <p data-bbox="197 1816 1015 1863">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.</p> <p data-bbox="197 1879 991 1980">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.</p> <p data-bbox="197 1995 1015 2096">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.</p> <p data-bbox="197 2112 719 2136">Winterberry is truly a wonderful plant for all seasons--enjoy.</p>	<p data-bbox="1110 495 1326 519">Gifts for the Gardener</p> <p data-bbox="1031 544 1401 591">Here are some great ideas for gifts your favorite gardener will just love!</p> <p data-bbox="1110 703 1321 728">Contact Information:</p> <p data-bbox="1031 752 1214 799">E-Mail: Click to contact us.</p> <p data-bbox="1031 824 1362 925">Telephone: (207) 985-6972 (800) 259-9231 (Sunday 6 AM to 10 AM)</p> <p data-bbox="1031 949 1169 996">Fax: (207) 985-6972</p> <p data-bbox="1031 1021 1262 1122">Address: Paul Parent Garden Club 2 Blueberry Pines Dr Kennebunk, ME 04043</p> <p data-bbox="1031 1146 1257 1220">Regular Phone Hours: Mon.-Sat. 8 AM to 6 PM Sunday: 10 AM to 6 PM</p> <p data-bbox="1046 1335 1390 1413">Tell your friends about Paul! Send them a copy of Paul's latest newsletter.</p> <p data-bbox="1031 1438 1377 1512">(Note: this will not subscribe them to the newsletter, nor retain their email - it will just send them a copy from you.)</p> <p data-bbox="1031 1536 1158 1570">Your e-mail</p> <p data-bbox="1031 1581 1110 1608">[]</p> <p data-bbox="1031 1619 1158 1653">Your name</p> <p data-bbox="1031 1664 1110 1691">[]</p> <p data-bbox="1031 1702 1158 1736">Their e-mail</p> <p data-bbox="1031 1747 1110 1774">[]</p> <p data-bbox="1031 1785 1158 1818">Their name</p> <p data-bbox="1031 1830 1110 1856">[]</p> <p data-bbox="1158 1868 1270 1901">[Send >>]</p> <p data-bbox="1046 2063 1382 2110">Where can I find Paul on Sunday mornings?</p> <p data-bbox="1031 2134 1382 2159">Click here to find Paul Parent Garden</p>	

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After a long winter, the snowdrops are the first spring flowering bulbs to emerge from your garden, and it's a real treat to watch the flowers develop. Snowdrops appear when the weather is still bleak outside during late winter and into early spring. The grass-like foliage begins to emerge as soon as the snow melts from the cold ground and is quickly followed by beautiful flowers.

The short stem that forms holds a single pendulous, white, mildly-scented six-petal flower that develops in the shape of a lantern or street light. As the temperatures warm up, the flower stem grows taller until it reaches 6 to 8 inches tall--and so does the foliage. The flowers break open, revealing three inner short petals in the center of the flower that are green tipped on the end of each petal. The three outer petals are oval, 3/4 inches long and pure white. The bloom is translucent white and the outer petals resemble the wings of a bumblebee.

From the Greek language, Galanthus means "milk flower," and according to Christian legend, the snowdrop first bloomed to coincide with the Feast of Purification, held on February 2, known as Candlemas Day. To celebrate the arrival of spring, snowdrops must be planted in the fall, and they will do best in full sun or partial shade. The bulb will grow best in a soil that does not dry out during the heat of summer so if your soils are sandy, plant them in partial shade or under tall deciduous trees that have had lower branches removed to allow the sunlight in.

Plant the bulbs in groups of 2 or 3, in a hole 3 to 4 inches deep and wide. If your soil is good, the bulbs will produce seeds that will mature and increase the size of the clump, so add a handful of compost to the hole when you plant. I also add Soil Moist granules to help hold water near the bulb. The bulbs will do great in heavy soil as long as there is no standing water on them. They prefer soils that are neutral, so add limestone on the areas you plant for better growth and more flowers.

Snowdrops are small bulbs and inexpensive to purchase when compared to tulips or daffodils. These bulbs are also not eaten by rodents, rabbits or deer and make a great plant to naturalize areas on your property where wildflowers grow. Once established, the area will thicken with flowers quickly. As long as you do not mow the foliage down before it has turned yellow, the plant will spread quickly.

The foliage needs time to ripen and uses the sun's energy to make food for the bulb for next year. If you plant in a grassy area, do not use a broadleaf weed killer or the bulbs will also die off. Plant bulbs in groundcover beds such as English ivy, pachysandra or vinca for wonderful early spring color before these plants make the new foliage in the spring.

If you plant on the side of a hill, set them up on the top of the hill and watch the plants spread down the hill each year as the plant produces seed--almost like a stream of water running down the hill.

Fertilize in the spring when the flowers fade and again in the fall with Bulb-Tone or Dr. Earth Bulb Food and never use bone meal as a fertilizer or it will encourage animals to dig in your planting beds. The bulbs are hardy from Maine to Northern Florida, as long as there is a cold spell during the winter season.

You will like these bulbs better than crocus, because of the time of the year they flower, the hardiness of the bulb, and the fact that the bulbs are not eaten by animals; plus they are inexpensive, so you can purchase more bulbs for your money and get more flowers. Plant some snowdrops this fall and in the spring you will know why I love this bulb so much. Enjoy!

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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. I drove by a "Pick Your Own Strawberries" field in October 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

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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!

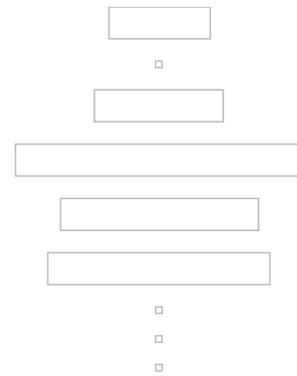
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Alaska trip

Paul Parent will be hosting a tour that includes:

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- Cruising the Inside Passage:
- Ketchikan
- Icy Strait Point
- Juneau
- Skagway
- Hubbard Glacier Cruising
- Seward
- Scenic Drive to Anchorage
- Denali National Park
- Fairbanks City Tour, a tour of the Gold Dredge # 8 and a cruise down the Chena river on the Riverboat Discovery Sternwheeler.

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This Week's Question

If you've lost your secateurs, what are you missing?

- A. aerator shoes
- B. gloves
- C. knee pads
- D. pruning shears
- E. sunglasses

This Week's Prize:

Wilt-Pruf®...The Safe Way To Reduce Moisture Loss When Plants Are Under Water Stress due to:

- winter kill
- windburn
- drought
- transplant shock

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Last Week's Question:

Which of these ancient philosophers was killed by poison made from the hemlock plant?

- A. Aristotle
- B. Plato
- C. Pythagoras
- D. Socrates
- E. Xenophanes

Last Week's Winner:

Karen Kaletski Dufault

Last Week's Answer:

D. Socrates

Last Week's Prize:

Wilt-Pruf®

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.

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- 8 tabbed sections

- 5 garden details sections with pockets for seeds, tags...
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- 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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FEATURED RECIPE:

Apple Almond Crunch Salad



What You Need

- 1 (10 ounce) package mixed salad greens
- 1/2 cup slivered almonds
- 1/2 cup crumbled feta cheese
- 1 cup tart apple, cored and chopped
- 1/4 cup sliced red onion
- 1/4 cup golden raisins
- 1 cup raspberry vinaigrette salad dressing

Step by Step:

- In a large salad bowl, place the salad greens, almonds, feta cheese, apple, red onion and raisins.
- Toss to blend.
- Apply salad dressing to individual servings.

Yield: 6 servings



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