

From: Paul Parent Garden Club <newsletter@paulparentclub.com>
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Edition 11.44	Paul Parent Garden Club News	November 3, 2011
 <p data-bbox="596 495 798 521">Featured Quote:</p> <p data-bbox="344 528 1042 577">"If you are not killing plants, you are not really stretching yourself as a gardener." ~J. C. Raulston</p> <div data-bbox="549 680 729 719" style="border: 1px solid black; height: 17px; width: 113px; margin: 10px auto;"></div> <p data-bbox="485 748 791 781" style="text-align: center;">Soil Moist Granules</p> <p data-bbox="204 819 1070 1021">Soil Moist has been developed to reduce the amount of water needed to maintain vigorous plants and other green goods. When mixed in the soil, the crystals will soften and swell as water is added and absorbed. When the potting system dries, the polymer will release its water to the plant. Soil Moist acts as a water reservoir--even during periods of drought the stored water is released to the plant. The expansion and retraction of the polymer during the watering cycle helps soil aeration, which is important to all plants.</p> <p data-bbox="204 1043 1034 1126">Note: Soil Moist must be incorporated into the soil at the root level of the plant/green good. Do not top dress or place on the surface. Should be kept out of drains.</p> <ul data-bbox="237 1160 836 1344" style="list-style-type: none">• stores over 200 times its weight in tap water• releases a steady supply of water as your plants need it• non-toxic, safe and economical to use• reduces plant watering by 50%**• reduces transplant shock• lasts several seasons** <p data-bbox="204 1368 1043 1424">**Results may vary depending on soil conditions such as salt, pH, microorganisms, and on UV light.</p> <div data-bbox="373 1503 900 1536" style="border: 1px solid black; height: 15px; width: 330px; margin: 10px auto;"></div> <p data-bbox="212 1576 1051 1729">As I sit down to write this week's newsletter I am very bothered with the weather outside! According to the local television station here in Maine, Chanel 6 out of Portland, we are about to have our first Nor'easter of the year and it's not even Halloween yet. If we receive what they are predicting, it will be the largest snow storm EVER recorded in Maine for the month of October, a record-breaking storm. Keith Carson said, "it is a "mid-winter- form" snow storm in late October--and this never happened before in Maine."</p> <p data-bbox="212 1744 1058 1870">Time will tell, and by Thursday when you read this, you will all know if the weatherman was right or wrong; it could be a long winter ahead of us gardeners. So, to keep with the theme of this story let's talk about three wonderful spring flowering bulbs that will bloom early--even in years when snow is still on the ground during the early spring. The problem we may have this year is getting the bulbs into the ground so we can enjoy them next spring in our gardens.</p> <p data-bbox="212 1886 1062 2036">The first is called snowdrops, also known as Galanthus, from the Greek. Galanthus means "milk flower;" named so because of the milky-white flowers. These bulbs are a member of the Amaryllis family and are native to the Mediterranean but are very hardy all over America. This wonderful flowering bulb is easy to grow and its normal flowering time in the Northeast is from January to March. It is one of the first bulbs to flower and if you plant some in a sheltered location, near the foundation of your house they will begin to bloom in late January and last well into March.</p> <p data-bbox="212 2051 1051 2150">Grow snowdrops in a sunny-to-partial-shaded area in your garden, along a wooded path, between shrubs or under flowering trees. They will grow best in a soil that is welled drained and able to hold moisture during the heat of summer. If your soil is sandy be sure to condition it with compost, peat moss, or animal manure and work in a bit of Soil Moist granules to help retain</p>		<p data-bbox="1123 495 1342 521">Gifts for the Gardener</p> <p data-bbox="1075 539 1366 618">Here are some great ideas for gifts your favorite gardener will just love!</p> <p data-bbox="1123 725 1337 752">Contact Information:</p> <p data-bbox="1075 777 1262 826">E-Mail: Click to contact us.</p> <p data-bbox="1075 851 1382 952">Telephone: (207) 985-6972 (800) 259-9231 (Sunday 6 AM to 10 AM)</p> <p data-bbox="1075 976 1219 1025">Fax: (207) 985-6972</p> <p data-bbox="1075 1050 1313 1151">Address: Paul Parent Garden Club 2 Blueberry Pines Dr Kennebunk, ME 04043</p> <p data-bbox="1075 1176 1307 1249">Regular Phone Hours: Mon.-Sat. 8 AM to 6 PM Sunday: 10 AM to 6 PM</p> <p data-bbox="1086 1357 1377 1435">Tell your friends about Paul! Send them a copy of Paul's latest newsletter.</p> <p data-bbox="1075 1460 1383 1561">(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="1075 1592 1209 1619">Your e-mail</p> <p data-bbox="1075 1632 1163 1659">[]</p> <p data-bbox="1075 1671 1206 1697">Your name</p> <p data-bbox="1075 1711 1163 1738">[]</p> <p data-bbox="1075 1749 1209 1776">Their e-mail</p> <p data-bbox="1075 1789 1163 1816">[]</p> <p data-bbox="1075 1827 1206 1854">Their name</p> <p data-bbox="1075 1868 1163 1895">[]</p> <p data-bbox="1177 1919 1286 1946">[Send >>]</p> <p data-bbox="1107 2112 1358 2139">Where can I find Paul on</p>

moisture. Snowdrops will not survive in soil that is heavy in clay or in gardens that stay wet during the spring or winter months with standing water.

Plant the bulbs 3 to 4 inches deep and space them 2 to 3 inches apart in your hole. I like to plant the bulbs in groups of 5 per hole and in just a couple years this clump will begin to enlarge because this wonderful bulb is self-seeding and will quickly expand in size. When you plant, and again when they finish flowering, fertilize with Seaweed Kelp Meal or Bulb-Tone fertilizer. Stay away from Bone meal to prevent attracting rodents to the garden. Plant your bulbs now to give them time to get established before the ground freezes.

Snowdrops will also do quite well when planted in groups in groundcover beds such as English ivy, myrtle and ground cover junipers for a bit of early color. Plant a clump or two near your back door because when you go to work each morning it will help you sense that spring cannot be that far away, making winter feel shorter. Snowdrops are rewarding flowers for your garden and as they mature and become better established in your garden, the numbers of flowers will increase each and every year.

The flower is unique because it has 3 inner petals that are short with a green spot on its tip, and 3 larger petals that are pure white and about twice the size. Some varieties droop like bells while others seem to open up and resemble tiny birds in flight. One last thing--when the flowers fade, never cut back the foliage that remains, because the foliage is making energy for the bulbs in the ground for next year's flowers. Snowdrops are happier in a fertile soil and they will multiply faster when planted in shrub beds or under trees that have been mulched to help protect them during harsh winters.

The second early flowering bulb is the *Leucojum*, known as snowflake or the snowflake plant. The Greek name means "white violet" because of their delicate fragrance. Snowflakes are also a member of the *Amaryllis* family, native to Europe and--most of do not know this--there is also a fall flowering variety, but it is not as attractive and seldom available.

The snowflakes are more adaptable to any type of garden soil than most bulbs and will do great in every types of location from sun to full shade. They will grow best in a rich soil that is well drained and will not tolerate standing water at any time of the year. Snowflakes prefer a rock garden, perennial gardens, borders, and they naturalize well in tall grassy areas or under tall growing trees like pines and oaks. This is my favorite spring flowering bulb for planting under trees in large planting beds or in openings in a wooded yard. As they multiply and spread, your woodland will become alive with early spring color.

If you're looking for small cut flowers to place in a tiny vase on your kitchen window sill, this is your plant. The flowers resemble small bells and these flowers have 6 petals like the snowdrops, but they are all the same length and size. Each of the petals has a tiny dot on the tip of the petal and the flowers hang down on 6 to 8 inch stems. Like the snowdrop, if undisturbed they will last for many years in your garden.

Fertilize when planting and again when they finish flowering in the spring. They also flower from late January to late March like the snowdrops but they can have several flowers on each stem, unlike the single bloom found on each stem of the snowdrop. Like the snowdrops, they are also self-seeding, are not eaten by rodents and--if fertilized when they finish flowering--will spread and multiply in your gardens.

The third is called Winter Aconite, also known as *Eranthis*, and it comes from the woodlands of Europe. It is a member of the *Ranunculus* family. They love a rich soil with a lot of organic matter so be sure to condition the soil before planting with compost or animal manure. Winter Aconite will do best if your soil is not acidic so be sure to add limestone or wood ash to the planting bed or even in the hole when planting the bulbs. Like the other two your soil must be well drained and never have standing water over them.

Winter aconite (*Eranthis*) also bloom early in the year, and by late January (if the ground is not frozen) they will begin to flower and last until late March. The flowers are a cheery bright yellow and resemble large buttercups. The bract of the flower often resembles a deep green flat needle-like collar around the flower, making it extra showy. The bract is not a true leaf but part of the flower; for example, our Christmas poinsettia that has all the red foliage around those small yellow button flowers on the tip of each branch. Each bulb will produce several flowers on short stems and they also bloom about the same time as snowdrops and snowflakes and look great when planted in the same flower bed.

When the plant finishes flowering, it will also make seed that will develop into new bulbs in several years and flower. Allow the foliage to turn brown before cleaning the flowerbed, as it is important to rebuild the energy the plant used to make those wonderful flowers. Fertilize when planting and again as the flowers fade to insure more flowers next year. Again, a sweet soil is the secret to this bulb and if you can spread limestone or wood ash around every year, they will multiply and quickly naturalize your plantings beds.

Before you plant the bulbs, soak them overnight in water to help get them off to a faster start, because the bulb is a small hard and knobby tuber. Plant them in groups of 5 bulbs, 2 inches apart and 2 inches deep for a better show of color. Plant them in a location under deciduous shrubs and trees as they love the winter sunshine and shade during the summer months. They are also self-seeding and will spread quickly if fed when planted and again every spring when the flowers fade. If you have a wooded yard with deciduous trees, plant them for wonderful early color. They will also do great along a stream as long as its feet are out of the water at all times. Plant winter aconite where you have lily of the valley, hosta, bleeding hearts, and Christmas roses growing for early color.

Now say to yourself: the snow will melt, and when it does, I will plant these wonderful late winter-flowering bulbs to help keep me SANE during long days ahead of me! Enjoy.

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When I think of fragrance in the garden, there is no better flower than the hyacinth! When in bloom, the flower produces a perfume that will fill the air around the garden with unforgettable fragrance that will bring you on your knees to take deep breaths of its intoxicating fragrance. The original hyacinth is a wild flower that grows all over eastern Mediterranean, in Asia and from Syria to Persia, where it stills blooms wild.

The Dutch took this wild flower to their breeding fields in 1562, and began to hybridize the plant to what you see today. Today, this plant is known as the Dutch hyacinth all over the world. In the early eighteenth century, the plant breeders had developed about 50 varieties, but today there are about 2,000 varieties available and more coming every year. Madame de Pompadour recommended to Louis XV extensive hyacinth plantings for his palace garden. At the time each bulb sold for \$500.00--I like today's prices much better.

A well-known Grecian myth tells how the hyacinth received its name. Hyacinthus was a gifted and handsome mortal youth, beloved by Apollo, the Sun God, and also by Zephyrus, God of the West Wind. Hyacinthus preferred to spend playful time with Apollo. Zephyrus became jealous and was annoyed that a mere mortal, however talented and beautiful, could command Apollo's affection and interest.

One day when Apollo had challenged Hyacinthus to a game of quoits or throwing the discus, Zephyrus let his jealous fury go. He blew strongly on the discus and caused it to strike Hyacinthus on the forehead, ending his life. Apollo was grieved and vowed the beauty of the young Hyacinthus would always be remembered. From the blood of the slain youth, he caused a path of fragrant, purple flowers to spring up and named them after the dead youth.

The original purple hyacinth has been hybridized to a wide range in colors and many shades of each color for you to choose from. Hyacinth flowers have the truest and largest variety of blues of any spring flowers. Besides blue, look for white, yellow, pink, orange, scarlet, maroon, salmon, violet and just about every color in the rainbow. Hyacinths are the easiest of all Dutch bulbs to grow in your garden. They do better if planted a bit deeper than most bulbs.

Hyacinths will flower longer than most bulbs because of short, thick stems and the way that the flowers are arranged on the stem in rows side by side and close together. This tight flower will not blow over in heavy winds or rain like tulips and daffodils do. If you do not move the bulb once planted, it will last for many years and usually outlast the time in the garden of most bulbs. Hyacinths will do best in a light soil with good drainage, a soil conditioned with compost or animal manure and refreshed every year with fertilizer like Bulb-Tone when the plant is in bloom.

When the flower fades, remove the entire flower stem right to the ground but do not touch the foliage until it begins to turn yellow, as this foliage is making energy for the bulb for next year's flowers. Hyacinths do best when planted in a sunny garden but will tolerate a bit of shade early in the day. Plant early in the fall to give the bulb time to make big roots and get established before the ground freezes. Plant bulbs in groups so they can brace each other in stormy weather, and remember groups of colorful bulbs look better and are more eye-catching than bulbs planted in rows or scattered throughout a large flowerbed as single bulbs.

Dig your hole 10 inches deep; add a bit of Soil Moist moisture retention granules and Bulb-Tone bulb food, never BONE MEAL, to prevent animals from digging up flowerbed looking for real buried bones. Cover the soil and keep the garden soil well watered until the ground freezes. Space the bulbs 4 to 6 inches apart in the hole to give them room to grow. I like to cover the planting bed with bark mulch for extra winter protection.

One of the nice things about hyacinths is that they are not eaten by rodents such as mice, voles and squirrels. In addition, when the plants begin to bloom, hyacinths will not be eaten by rabbits and deer--and that is one thing less we have to worry about in the garden. All the rodents and animals we just mentioned love tulips and will eat them in the ground and above ground--but not hyacinths. Hyacinths are easy to plant and care for--and the animals that live around your home will not bother them.

For forcing--if you have an unheated garage or tool-shed, pot some bulbs in containers filled with soil and keep them watered and cool with temperatures less than 50 degrees. For the next 10 weeks, the plants will make roots and begin to think of flowering, so keep them cool.

I have used the steps that lead down into my basement from the bulkhead door with great success. Halfway up to the outside doors seems to have the best temperatures. Watering the potted bulbs is necessary during those 10 weeks of growing. After 10 weeks, bring a pot or two into the house and watch the bulbs begin to grow; enjoy the fragrant flowers in a couple of weeks. If you are going to force the hyacinth to flower, always use the biggest bulb you can find and stay away from bag bulbs--as they are too small to force.

Also look for the pre-treated hyacinths for forcing, in the special hyacinth glass that looks like an hour glass that tells time filled with sand. This special hyacinth glass holds the bulb in place and keeps the bulb in water at the right level to prevent root rot. I always buy extra bulbs and store them in the vegetable crisper to keep them cold, as they were tricked to believe that they already had winter.

When the bulb finishes flowering, toss it into your compost pile or pot it up with soil and place it on a sunny window for 4 to 6 weeks so it can make energy for next year. After the 4 to 6 week period on your windowsill, place the potted bulb in the basement and allow it to dry up. Plant in the garden in April and it will flower next fall.

If you have a grassy area or wild flower bed on your property and would like spring flowers, look for the miniature hyacinths called grape hyacinths. Grape hyacinths come in blue and white and

will spread quickly in these areas as long as they receive plenty of sun.

If you have a shady area with good soil, look for wood hyacinths, which will naturalize very easily for you. Wood hyacinths come in white, pink, blue and purple. Just like the Dutch hyacinths, grape hyacinths and wood hyacinths are not eaten by rodents and other animals.

Like the Dutch hyacinths, these two beautiful hyacinths are fragrant, long lasting and spread in a soil that is well drained and fertile, so feed the when planting and every spring when they come into bloom with Bulb-Tone fertilizer.

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What do we do with all of our summer-flowering bulbs during the winter months, if they are not hardy enough to stay in the ground? It's simple, we bring them into our basement for the winter, and this is how you will prepare them to keep them healthy.

Begin when Mother Nature produces a killing frost in your garden and your bulb plants turn BLACK. Now cut them down to the ground and dig them up. Shake as much of the soil off the bulbs as possible but **do not** wash them clean! Set bulbs in your garage or tool shed for a few days until the soil on them has dried completely. Once you have dug them up, do not leave them outside or any additional frost will kill the bulb by freezing it.

I want you to buy a general purpose Rose and Flower Garden Dust and dust all parts of the bulb before storage. This dusting of the bulb will help to keep it protected from any over wintering disease and insect's problems.

Glads are easy; just look at the bulb closely and you will see that there are now two bulbs piggy backing together. The top bulb is the one to keep and the bulb on the bottom was the original bulb that you planted and which has now transferred all of its energy to the new bulb on the top--it must be discarded. Dust the good bulbs and store them in a pair of old panty hose that you will hang from the rafters in the basement. The panty hose will breathe well and keep the bulbs healthy until you plant them in the spring.

Dahlias: the bulbs will look like a clump of potatoes and should not be divided until you are ready to plant in the spring. Dust the bulbs and store in boxes on the floor or in a crawl space where the temperature stays around 50 degrees. Place one inch of peat moss or compost in the box and set bulbs on the material, being sure that bulb clusters do not touch each other. Cover the bulbs with 2 inches of organic material and then cover with newspaper, never with plastic--plastic will sweat and wet the covering, causing rotting of the bulbs.

Tuberous begonias and callas: Clean any parts of stems still attached to them and make sure that where they were attached has dried well, with no soft spots. Dust well and store in a box of peat moss or compost kept on the floor. The floor will stay cold and that will help keep bulbs dormant better. Separate bulbs 2 inches apart and cover with newspaper.

Canna lilies: these will store best if put in containers filled with peat moss or compost, standing up like they grew in your garden. If the plant grew in a pot, just cut the stems at the soil line and place the pot on the floor in the basement. Garden grown should be dusted before being potted in organic matter. Keep them as far away from furnace or heat source as possible, and do not water until you are ready to start growing in March indoors or directly in the garden in early May.

Elephant Ears: Dig bulb and clean of any leaf stems still attached to the bulb. Dust the bulb and store in a pot filled with peat or compost and place on the floor covered with newspaper. Make sure the bulb is dry before storing it for the winter and bulb faces up. Repot in soil during March for a jump start on the season.

Freesia, ranunculus and anemone: these should be cleaned of any stems and dried well in the basement before storage. This will take longer than the other bulbs to dry and harden. Ranunculus will look like a mini bunch of bananas about 1 inch long. Freesia and anemone look like a bunch of dried up raisins and are hard. These three can be stored in a small box on the floor with a bit of peat or compost mixed around them to keep them apart and from touching. Dust them by placing them in a small paper bag, add the dust, and shake to cover the bulbs. These three bulbs can be forced into growing indoors right after the first of the year by potting them and growing on the window sill. Flowers will form in April and May if they are potted, or you can wait and them plant in the ground in May for summer color in the garden.

Enjoy.

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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

If I were to plant a tree of the genus *Quercus* in my yard, what kind of tree would it be?

[**Click Here to Answer**](#)

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

The dahlia is popular worldwide for late summer and autumn color. Where is the dahlia from?

Last Week's Winner:

Carol Bednarowski

Last Week's Answer:

Mexico

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:

Autumn Fruit Dip



This is perfect for dipping freshly picked apples or pears into!

What You Need:

- 8 ounces cream cheese, softened
- 8 ounces vanilla yogurt
- 5 tablespoons honey
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg
- 1 pinch allspice

Step by Step:

- Beat the cream cheese in a small bowl until very smooth and creamy.
- Add the remaining ingredients and mix well.
- Spoon into a serving bowl, cover tightly and refrigerate for at least three hours.
- Serve chilled.

Yield: 2 cups of dip



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