

PLANT-A-PLANT COMPANY
Creating distinctive landscapes since 1982
703-327-6844

MEMBER OF:

American Nursery & Landscape Assn.
Florida Landscape Assn.
Virginia Nursery & Landscape Assn.
Northern Virginia Nursery and
Landscape Assn.
Bethesda Business Bureau

LISBETH L. PRINS
President

Virginia Certified Horticulturist

Summer 2008



Dear Customers:

I hope this finds you and yours well and ready to enjoy your outdoor living spaces over the summer break especially with escalating fuel prices. Since the price of fuel continues to climb, we now plan our site visits and replacements (if necessary) to the same area so we can keep our costs from skyrocketing. The cost of deliveries to our nursery is shocking! Please bear with us as we all deal with the soaring costs of deliveries. (I did not budget money for this one line item.) The storms this spring, while welcome, have been rather disruptive at the nursery. Thankfully, the plants are happy and thriving. I have never seen the plants look so happy. Some of the shrubs have grown so fast, their potting up (shifting to next size) rate is three times faster than in previous years.

Between the mild winter and deer population there is no shortage of ticks, so please, check everyone in your household daily, even your pets. Remember the blacklegged tick, which transmits Lyme disease, feed on mice, squirrels and pets, so deer do not need to visit for a Lyme-infected tick to find you.

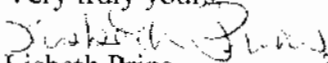
As the surrounding land is prepared for sewer and water and sod fields galore there has been a migration of animals for our viewing pleasure. Big, huge black snakes – and I mean **huge** – bears, coyotes, bobcats, and other animals that make strange noises throughout the night. (The black snakes are great at ridding the garden of mice and other rodents, so please let them be, they are not interested in eating you and carry no disease.)

Ashlynn has been very busy here in the office. School teaches more computer classes than when I was in elementary! She is very adept at fixing the computer. She continues to play soccer, ride, and is bridging to a junior Girl Scout this summer. She has a veggie garden and finds relics when she plants; however, she plants the veggie seeds wherever she pleases – many surprises have been popping up lately.

For faster, more efficient newsletter delivery, please provide us your personal email address to Lisbeth@PlantAPlant.com. We will treat your email address with the same confidentiality as we have your mailing address and telephone number(s) for 26 years.

Take care – have fun – and enjoy your family.

Very truly yours,


Lisbeth Prins
President

Serving Northern Virginia and Surrounding Counties
25283 LIGHTRIDGE FARM ROAD, ALDIE, VIRGINIA 20105-2605
www.plantaplant.com



Add a Weigela (or Two) to Your Garden

Over the last few years I have come to appreciate this interesting, diverse and useful genus. Now, here's a shrub, *Weigela*, that's easy to propagate and easy to grow. Let's take a closer look at this easy to grow plant that also presents itself well in a container.

There are roughly ten species of *Weigela*, all of which are shrubs native to temperate East Asia. The most common, and most ornamental species is *Weigela florida*, a rounded to arching shrub that typically grows to 6 to 8 feet tall. The species and its hybrids account for nearly all of the numerous *Weigela* cultivars. *Weigela florida* is prized primarily for the funnel-shaped flowers that engulf the plant from May to June; *Weigela* is a blooming machine. Many of the newer cultivars have the added benefit of re-blooming during the summer. Hummingbirds and Sphinx moth adore *Weigela* flowers. In addition to flowers, there are numerous cultivars that have attractive colorful foliage. This foliage provides season-long interest after the blooms have faded. Selections have been made for leaf colors such as bright yellow, copper, burgundy, near black, and of course, variegated forms. Colorful foliage has made *Weigela* a season-long ornamental plant. We are growing and testing an outstanding variegated form.

One of the best features of *Weigela* is that it's user friendly. Adaptable to many soil types, it's hardy to USDA zone 4 and has no serious pest problems. In a word, it's reliable! The only requirement of this plant is that it requires full sun to produce copious flowers.



Colorful Foliage

Awarded the Pennsylvania Horticulture Society Gold Medal for the year 2000, the *Weigela* WINE & ROSES(R) 'Alexandra' is perhaps the most exciting variety to hit the market in years. Herman Geers of the Netherlands hybridized this healthy growing form with large, glossy, dark burgundy-purple leaves. The foliage color is so appealing; its initial European success has been as a cut branch to the floral industry. Geer actually leases plants to cut growers who sell branches at the famous Almeer flower market. WINE & ROSES has burgundy leaves and vivid deep pink flowers. It is a substantial improvement in *Weigela*.

Weigela MIDNIGHT WINE™ 'Elvera' is Herman Geers' newest *Weigela* introduction and, like WINE & ROSES, it has purple leaves and pink flowers. What makes this plant truly unique is its dwarf mounded habit. While WINE & ROSES is full-sized *Weigela* MIDNIGHT WINE grows only 8 to 10 inches tall and as twice as wide. Its unique habit makes it an excellent shrub for the front of the border and it can easily be integrated with perennials such as *Artemisia* 'Silver Mound'.

The newest addition to the selection of variegated *Weigela* is called 'My Monet' and we are one of the first to grow it commercially. This is a breakthrough plant with cream, pink and green variegation on a dwarf (10-16") tall plant. This little beauty is great in mass plantings used much like you would use perennials or annuals. It has attractive pink flowers in spring and the colorful foliage gives you color all season long. This plant is going to change the way you think about flowering shrubs!

The improvements in *Weigela* over the last twenty years have been substantial. Gains have been made in foliage color, plant habit, flowering and hardiness. The fact is - *Weigela florida* is more than just a spring splash of colorful blooms. Colorful foliage delivers season long interest and extended impulse sales at retail. It's reliable and has no pest problems.

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK:

Hydrangea Care

Pruning and caring for Hydrangea is not difficult. You just have to know the type of plant you are growing and when it makes its flower buds: Hydrangeas can be divided into two groups: 1) those that make their flower buds in the autumn then flower the following summer, and 2) those that make their flower buds in the spring and flower that same year. This guide makes it easy to tell which type of hydrangea you have so you can care for it accordingly and get the best flower display possible.

Pruning Young, Newly Planted Hydrangeas

With all types of hydrangea it pays dividends to build a strong bushy plant before you worry about flowers. The first few years after being planted are the most important for pruning, because it builds the foundation for years to come. As a young plant it is best to prune or pinch your plant in order to build a full bodied, well branched plant. Every time you cut off the growing tip of a plant, you get twice as many branches and thus in the long run more flowers. (Lisbeth did her undergraduate research on this. Try it on an annual coleus: you will be amazed.)



If the plant is leggy when you purchased it, shear the plant back hard by 1/3 to 1/2 its original size (except Annabelle's 1/4 at the most). Once it puts on an inch or two of growth, pinch the branch tips to remove just the growing tip. This tip controls branching. Once it is removed the buds below it will turn into two or more stems. Once these new branches grow an inch or two, pinch the tip out again. You can repeat this throughout the first growing season as you are tending your garden. Although you may sacrifice one year of bloom, this technique results in a well branched, full bodied plant that will have more flowers in subsequent years. The second season in the ground, repeat the pinching practice (or lightly shear). Cease pruning and pinching to allow the flower buds to set. We do this here so minimal, if any, pinching is necessary. Remember, do not prune the stalks that bloom on new wood until May 15th to allow flowers and buds to fully evolve.

Pruning Hydrangea – Species List

Hydrangea anomala (Climbing Hydrangea)

Pruning: Pinch as a young plant to increase the number of shoots. No need to prune once established.

Hydrangea arborescens (Smooth Hydrangea)

Pruning: Forms its flower buds in the late spring to early summer. Prune in late fall, winter or early spring. It responds well to being cut back to about 10"-12" above the ground. This gives you stronger stems and larger flowers. (Our Virginia native hydrangea falls into this category.) The selection White Dome is very attractive in the winter, so early spring pruning is best for this selection.

Cultivars and Descriptions

Everyone knows the large, snowball-like blooms of Snow on the Mountain, which is the common name for the cultivar 'Grandiflora'. Unlike the species, this plant does not have the flat flower head composed of mostly fertile flowers. It has a big ball of sterile flowers that bow to the ground after a heavy rain. The cultivar most commonly grown today is 'Annabelle'. This is because it has the extremely large, tight, symmetrical blooms, reaching up to 14 inches across. It is widely used in the north because it is hardy to zone 4, and because it blooms on new wood. The wood will often freeze back in the winter but will still reliably bloom from buds produced in the spring. It may be pruned either in the fall or spring, or in mid to late summer after it is finished blooming. The one negative attribute of 'Annabelle' is that its blooms are so big and heavy the plant may collapse under its own weight. So pinching helps as well as staking. White Dome is a new lace-cap variety that has large lacy dome-shaped blooms. It has attractive large, dark green leaves and strong flower stems that never flop. This plant is particularly attractive in the winter when the snow settles atop the dried flower heads.



Hydrangea macrophylla (Big Leaf Hydrangea)

Pruning: Big Leaf Hydrangeas typically do not require much pruning; but, if you wish to build a tighter plant or maintain a shorter size follow these instructions:

The flower buds form in later summer and then flower the next year in early to mid-summer. The best time to prune is it after it blooms, from mid-July to mid-August. Selectively prune out any dead stems, or old non-flower producing stems. Cease pruning in mid-August to allow time for the flower buds to form prior to winter.

Cultivars and Descriptions:

Hydrangea macrophylla is unique for several reasons. It sets its flower buds in the fall and overwinters them. A hard winter can kill the buds and eliminate flowering. An early fall or late spring freeze may also result in a loss of flowers. Although completely root hardy in Zone 5, the buds should be protected with a light mulch to improve the bloom reliability. These are the plants usually given as gifts in small pots.

Many new and rediscovered cultivars of Hydrangea macrophylla are hitting the market. It's exciting to see so many varieties, but only time will tell which are the best for your area. New breeding efforts are underway to bring us hardier cultivars and more varieties that will bloom on new wood. Until then, remember to mulch in the winter and to site these plants in a warm microclimate for best results.

Hydrangea paniculata (Panicle Hydrangea)

Pruning: Best pruned in early spring. Blooms on new wood. Very tolerant of hard pruning, in fact cutting the plant back from 1/2 to 1/3 will result in larger flowers. Can be pruned in winter, but why not enjoy the winter beauty of snow on the dried flower heads.

Hydrangea serrata (Sawtooth Hydrangea)

Hydrangea serrata is considered by some to be a Hydrangea macrophylla variety and not a distinct species. Yes, the plants are quite similar in many respects, but I personally view these plants as distinct, and hence treat them here as a separate species. I love this plant! The new varieties are sensational.

Pruning: Serrata Hydrangeas typically do not require much pruning, but if you wish to build a tighter plant or maintain a shorter size follow these instructions:

These Hydrangeas form their flower buds in later summer and then flower in late June. The best time to prune is after it blooms, from mid-July to mid-August. Cease pruning in mid-August to allow time for the flower buds to form prior to winter.

Hydrangea Summary

As you can see the genus Hydrangea is an amazing group of plants. Is it any wonder that they are so popular?

There are several excellent books on Hydrangea that can guide you on your Hydrangea journey. HYDRANGEA Species & Cultivars by Corinne Mallet is a two volume set that is invaluable to the Hydrangea fanatic. It has excellent descriptions and color plates of hundreds of varieties. The book HYDRANGEAS by Haworth-Booth is also an excellent resource. Still, the best way to learn about Hydrangeas is to start growing them and see the beauty and excitement these plants create. And for those of you who felt this article gave you more information that you ever wanted to know about Hydrangea, here's another tidbit; the name Hydrangea is Greek meaning "water vessel". It is derived from the shape of its seed capsule.

June Gardening Checklist

- ✂ **Plant annuals. Shade or semi-shade:** Ageratum, alyssum, green-leaf wax begonia, coleus, forget-me-not, impatiens, lobelia, penta, salvia, snapdragon, verbena, and vinca (dry shade). **Sun:** Canna, coleus, cornflower, cosmos, four o'clock, marigold, morning glory, petunia, snow-on-the-mountain, sunflower, verbena, vinca, and bronze-leaf wax begonia.
- ✂ **Plant fragrant annuals.** Ageratum, aster, baby's breath, calendula, celosia, cornflower, cosmos, dahlia, dianthus, evening stock, four o'clock, heliotrope, herbs, larkspur, fragrant plantain lily, marigold, nasturtium, nicotiana, phlox, rose geranium, salvia, snapdragon, statice, stock, sweet alyssum, sweet pea, sweet yarrow, tuberosa, verbena, and zinnia.
- ✂ **Plant color. Trees:** Magnolia, redbud, styrax, yellowwood, maple and red jade crabapple. **Shrubs:** Azalea, buddleia, lilac, quince, forsythia, mahonia, nandina, spiraea, and weigela. **Perennials:** Astilbe, asclepias, baptisia, campanula, columbine, coreopsis, dicentra, echinacea, fern, gaillardia, gaura, helleboros, heuchera, kniphofia, mimulus, myosotis, paeonia, phlox, platycodon, primula, rudbeckia, scabiosa, veronica, viola, and vinca minor. **Perennial vines:** Clematis, begonia, jasmine, kiwi, trumpet vine, and wisteria. **Annual vines:** mandevilla, moon vines, and morning glory.
- ✂ **Plant shrubby ground cover on hillsides and steep areas for less erosion and maintenance, to fill unusually shaped areas, or as a transition between grassy areas and shrubbery. Shade:** English ivy, ferns, liriopse, pachysandra, vinca major, microbiota, mondo grass, dwarf mondo grass, and the new low weigela. **Hot, sunny locations:** Vinca minor, asian jasmine, trailing junipers, and thyme. In addition, lowbush blueberry, ground cover raspberry, or vinca are easy to maintain and cover enough not to allow weeds should everything keep yielding to a minimum. A massing of shrubs is a very effective end.
- ✂ **Create a container garden at entries, decks, patios, or wherever you need a burst of color or special interest.** Select a container that will drain well and add plants with similar light, water, and soil requirements. For year round stability of color, habit, and texture, begin with a colorful evergreen and add season annuals, perennials, ferns, and herbs. Add trailing plants to soften the container edges.



- ✂ **Transplant perennials and evergreens.** It's best to transplant on an overcast day so plants will re-establish more quickly. Water regularly. Keep the soil moist, not soggy. Once the blooms fade on spring and early summer flowering perennials use two sharp spading forks to jiggle the roots apart rather than severing the clump in half. Using this fork method reduces damage to the roots.
- ✂ **Cut back chrysanthemums and asters, and pinch new growth to keep plants compact until about eight weeks before they are to bloom.** If you prefer having large blooms on strong stems, disbud by removing the small, side buds that form in the angles of the leaves along these stems. This will allow all food reserves to be used for one large flower rather than many smaller ones.
- ✂ **Spring-flowering perennials.** Cut back those bending over, and remove discolored leaves on ones that have stopped blooming.
- ✂ **Summer-flower perennials.** These may be cut back for extended or delayed bloom (echinacea, heliopsis, phlox, platycodon, and veronica). Deadhead to extend bloom.
- ✂ **Prune spring-blooming shrubs and trees after bloom,** before new growth begins. Prune erratic growth for a more natural look, and shear for a more formal look. Please do not create 'meatballs'. The bottom of the plants should be wider than the top. **Do not prune** summer-blooming or fall-blooming plants now.
- ✂ **Autumn-flowering perennials.** Pinch or cut back for height restraint, thin and shape. Prune or thin those growing out of bounds.
- ✂ **Possible plant behavior this month.** Hollies and laurels may have yellow leaves inside the plant that drop as they prepare for new growth and flowers. Pin oaks and some other shade trees may have leaf yellowing caused by alkaline soils. Have a soil test to determine pH. Rose foliage can have black spot and powdery mildew. Aphids on river birch can cause a black mildew-type residue causing leaves to yellow and blacken sometimes from sooty mold
- ✂ **Mulch around large shade trees if grass is not thriving.** Mulch will enhance the area and help protect the trees from maintenance equipment. As an alternative, combine pathways of mulch or stone with shade-loving ground cover to create a woody effect. Do not allow mulch to touch the trunk of the tree. (See July's checklist.)
- ✂ **Water the lawn effectively and economically.** When there is insufficient rainfall, provide one inch of water each week to moisten the top five to six inches of soil beneath the grass. If possible, water before mid-morning to avoid evaporation and prevent fungus. To decrease evaporation, adjust sprinklers to water with rain-like droplets and keep water low to the ground. It is best to water deeply once or twice a week, rather than sprinkling every day.
- ✂ **Shrubs and perennials under the eaves.** It may be necessary to water these plants more frequently than the rest of the landscape since rain and sprinklers may not always reach them. However, check the soil before watering.
- ✂ **Water plants that suffered from winter damage due to last summer' drought.** It is most important to protect these plants from drought stress during June, July and August. They will need an inch of water a week, whether from rain or watering.
- ✂ **Leach container soils occasionally to remove any accumulated mineral salts from fertilizer or hard water.** Brown leaf edges and crusting on the sides of clay pots indicate a salt problem. To leach large containers, water until the soil is soaked then



slowly run hose water into the pot for about twenty minutes. For small pots, water each container until it drains freely from the bottom holes. Wait a few minutes and repeat.

- ✂ **Watch for insect infestations.** Use integrated pest management (IPM), administering chemical sprays only when necessary. (Always read and carefully follow manufacturer's directions.) Do not use beetle bags for **Japanese Beetles**. Join with your neighbors to use BT on your lawns. Not only will it help eliminate Japanese Beetles, it will also rid your yard of grubs without killing earthworms. Whiting of or white dots on azalea leaves indicate **Lace Bugs**. Examine a leaf to see if specks of white or red rub off the bottom. If so, spray with Safer Soap, following manufacturer's directions. Bayer systemic, although more toxic, works longer and requires less labor. **Sawfly** grubs are borers and look like a cross between a maggot and a caterpillar and can be controlled by using beneficial wasps.
- ✂ **Maintain weed control** to conserve moisture and nutrients in the soil and help prevent the spread of disease and insects. Water the day before weeding to make the job easier. For really tough weeds, use pliers.
- ✂ **Set your sun dial on June 15.** Place it so the shadow falls at twelve o'clock at exactly noon on this date.

ADDING INTEREST TO THE GARDEN IN JUNE

Achillea, ageratum, allium, alyssum, aquilegia, aruncus, astilbe, satsuki azalea, bell flower, bleeding heart, calendula, campanula, canna, carnation, catalpa, centaurea, cerastium, Chinese chestnut, clematis, coreopsis, cosmos, daisy, daylily, delphinium, deutzia, dianthus, digitalis, euphorbia, forget-me-not, fringe tree, gaillardia, hearty geranium, golden-rain-tree, helianthemum, hemerocallis, heuchera, hosta, hydrangea, climbing hydrangea, Jacob's ladder, kniphofia, kousa dogwood, lavender, liatris, tree lilac, lilies, loosestrife, Virginia magnolia, mallow, meadowsweet, mimosa, mock orange, monarda, moonflower, morning glory, nepeta, nicotiana, penstemon, peony, petunia, phlox, platycodon, poppy, potentilla, primrose, pyrethrum daisy, late rhododendron, rose, salvia, scabiosa, sedum, smokebush, new growth on blue spruce, stachys, styrax, veronica, weigela and yellowwood.



July Gardening Checklist

- ✂ **Plant container-grown shrubs and trees, or balled and burlapped trees.**
- ✂ **Plant annuals.** Begonia, caladium, celosia, coleus, cosmos, delphinium, dianthus, geranium, gomphrena, helianthus, impatiens, marigold, nicotiana, nierembergia, nigella, periwinkle, petunia, poppy, portulaca, salvia, snapdragon, sunflower, verbena, and zinnia.
- ✂ **Plant perennials.** Achillea, aruncus, baptisia, campanula, coreopsis, daylily, Echinacea, gaillardia, gloriosa daisy, hardy hibiscus, hollyhock, lobelia, papaver, phlox, platycodon, rudbeckia, and veronica. **Shrubs:** Abelia, buddleia, lagerstroemia, hibiscus, nandina, potentilla, and roses. **Vines:** Clematis, clock vine, cypress vine, kiwi, and morning glory.
- ✂ **Plant and transplant evergreens after new growth have hardened off.** Water well, and often.
- ✂ **Bulb maintenance.** Plant and reset existing iris. Separate and replant lily bulbs after bloom. Divide and replant daffodils as necessary. Plant gladiola for fall bloom.

- ✂ **Deadhead perennials, mid-month to late month. To prolong bloom:** Achillea, campanula, coreopsis, dicentra, gaillardia, gypsophila, hemerocallis, helipis, larkspur, lavender and limonium. **Prevent seed set:** Amaranthus, aquilegia, balsam, cleome, columbine, phlox, salvia, and valeriana. **Prune:** Crowded or sprawling plants to keep them in their own space. When necessary stake perennials using staking rings.
- ✂ **Do not over-water!** Established plants need to be watered deeply to encourage deeper roots that will result in the plants' needs for less water. Before watering all plants – check by pulling back the mulch and testing the existing moisture two inches into the soil with your finger or a stick. When soil adheres and feels wet, you do not need to water at this time, or insert a moisture meter into the soil as an indicator. However, if it reads “dry” after you just watered, it has not been inserted deeply enough, or it may be malfunctioning. Keep leaves dry on plants prone to fungus and mildew (phlox, crape myrtle, lilac, and roses). When watering evergreens rinse off foliage.
- ✂ **When using an irrigation system, do not set it and run every day, or every other day.** Leave it off until the plants need water, then let it run one cycle through all zones, then turn it off until the plants need water again. If you must water twice a week, run it for seven minutes in each zone. Too much water is one of the best ways to kill plants, create untreatable soil fungus, and welcome slugs.

The Virginia Cooperative Extension recommends if you cannot water during hot, dry spells, then DO NOTHING. Do not prune (it can force the plant to use reserves to make new growth), or apply fertilizer (it can burn dry root hairs), or apply pest controls (it may be toxic to dry foliage). Plants compensate for stress by relative inactivity. Cultural practices that encourage growth, instead of being beneficial, can induce further stress.

PLEASE NOTE: A reason plants do not perform well during periods of drought, even when irrigated is the chemicals the irrigated water is treated with. Chemicals, such as chlorine and fluoride, build up in the soil and deter plant growth and even kill plants.

- ✂ **Mow** when grass is two to four inches tall for deeper root growth, to reduce water needs, and shorten mowing time. Short clippings protect grass roots, decompose faster, and add nutrients to the lawn. For best turf growth, water the lawn to a depth of four to six inches and do not water for a week. Light sprinkling is often harmful. Keep lawnmower blades sharp. A brown or grayish cast over the lawn may be caused by dull or improperly adjusted mower blades that shred grass rather than cut it.
- ✂ **Prune and thin major shade trees to increase light for sparse lawns and semi-shade loving plants like azalea and rhododendron. Do Not Top Trees!**
- ✂ **Tie back all espaliered plants during the active growing season.** Check existing ties and loosen restrictive ones. Maintain the desire shape of the plant by pruning those that bear flowers on this year's growth only in early spring, and plants that bear flowers on last year's growth right after bloom. Fertilize espaliered plants sparingly to avoid riotous growth.
- ✂ **Mulch should not be more than two to three inches deep around trees and shrubs.** Begin by applying three to ten inches from the trunk or stem of the plant, depending on its size, and create of donut of mulch around the plant. Mulching will maintain moisture and subdue weeds. However, mulching more than this recommended amount will cause roots to grow too shallow making it more difficult for plants to survive drought. Consider using leaf mulch; it can be used annually, and keeps its color and attracts earthworms. When using double-shredded bark, only apply every second year.

- ✂ **Fertilize everything lightly and water in well.** **Roses:** continue feeding with organic fertilizer made for roses. **Chrysanthemums:** Use a water-soluble organic fertilizer or manure tea every two to three weeks until buds form. **Annuals, container plants, and house plants:** use a water-soluble fertilizer. **Acid-loving broadleaf evergreens** (azalea, holly, pieris, rhododendron): Feed after bloom with oak-leaf compost or cottonseed meal if not done in June. **Perennials:** Only those that are heavy feeders or those recently cut back. Watering all plants well the day before applying fertilizer will aid absorption of fertilizer. (Peter's and liquid Osmocote Slow Release are the best.)
- ✂ **Remove suckers or sprouts from small trees and shrubs** (crape myrtle, some fruit trees, and roses) to maintain adequate nourishment, moisture and appearance. This is the growth that appears at the base of the trunk and can be prolific.
- ✂ **Watch for pests.** **Anthracnose** on dogwood. **Aphids** on spiraea, roses, birch, and fruit trees. **Bag worms** on northern white cedar, red cedar, arborvitae, juniper, and other conifers, and possibly on box elder, sycamore, black locust, willow, elm, poplar, oak, maple and persimmon. Pull off and destroy or use formant oil at appropriate time per label instructions. **Bark beetles** on pines and spruces. **Black spot and rose slugs** on roses. **Black-vine weevil and two-banded Japanese weevils** on rhododendron and azalea. **Dogwood borers** on lawn mower-wounded trees: apple, ash, birch, willow, cherry, dogwood, hazel, and oak hickory. **Eastern tent caterpillars** (only common caterpillar with a white stripe down its back) on wild cherry, crabapple, and apple trees, and in peak years on ash, birch, black gum, willow, maple, oak, poplar, cherry and plum. Pull out the tent with a rake, or your hand (wear gloves, or use a plastic bag as a glove turned inside out, tie up, and discard appropriately). **Fireblight bacteria** on hawthorn, pyracantha, apple, crabapple, plum, and pear trees. **Fungus** on azalea. **Hemlock woolly adelgid** on Canadian or Eastern hemlock and Carolina hemlock. **Japanese beetles** on roses, crape myrtle, Norway maple, linden, fruit trees and others. **Lacebugs** on azalea, pieris, ornamental trees, pyracantha, and others. **Leafminers** on boxwood, columbines, holly, and others. **Mites** on evergreens. **Powdery mildew** on non-resistant crape myrtle, zinnia and others. **Red-headed pine sawflies** on host mugo pines. **Red mites and black root rot** on Japanese holly. **Slugs** on delphinium, hosta, lupine, marigold, zinnia, and all seedlings. **Spider mites** on dwarf Alberta spruce, rose, and fruit trees.
- ✂ **When making your own insecticidal soap, use softened or distilled water.** The solution will be more soapy and slippery, which helps to kill insects. Experts agree that a strong spray of water from your garden hose will dislodge 70 to 90 percent of aphids, caterpillars, and spider mites. Be sure to spray the undersides of the leaves, too. **If you must resort to using pesticides,** water plants several hours before apply chemicals, especially during dry weather. Drought-stressed plants have less water in their tissues and the chemicals that enter the leaves will be more concentrated and may burn the leaves. **Do not use either method on windy days.** Always wear proper clothing and eye protection.
- ✂ **Continue with weed control** to allow plants, shrubs, trees, and lawn to receive all of the applied nutrients and water. Cultivate exposed soil frequently. Pull weeds by hand, or carefully administer Round-Up to the unwanted growth only. Most other weed killers can leach into the soil and cause damage to the lawn or ornamental plants.
- ✂ **Avoid deep cultivation of flower beds during hot, dry weather.** Loosening the soil in these conditions reduces water uptake by increasing loss of soil water and damaging surface roots.



- ✂ **Turn compost and keep damp.** Hasten decomposition by adding a 12-6-6 fertilizer. Do not add diseased plants, coal, or charcoal ash, or anything you are not certain is free of chemical pesticides or herbicide residues.
- ✂ **House plants.** If suffering from excessive heat, move them into a more protected area. Keep them free from insects. Do not let water stand in the saucers of plants summering outdoors. If your plants are not performing well, indoors or outdoors, it may be the chlorine or fluoride in the water. To allow these chemicals to evaporate, fill watering cans and let stand twenty-four hours before using.
- ✂ **Birds.** In sheltered areas, keep fresh water and seed available in regularly cleaned containers. Birds will help to control insects besides providing pleasure and liveliness in your garden. Be careful not to use mirrors or any reflective objects in these areas to prevent birds from flying into them.

ADDING INTEREST TO THE GARDEN IN JULY

Abelia, achillea, allium, althea, asclepias, astilbe, black-eyed Susan, butterfly bush, canna, clematis, cleome, coreopsis, cosmos, crape myrtle, dahlia, deschampsia, dianthus, echinacea, euphorbia, geranium, gladiolus, gypsophila, heather, helenium, helianthus, hemerocallis, hibiscus, hollyhock, hosta, hydrangea, impatiens, lantana, lavandula, liatris, ligularia, lobelia, lythrum, marigold, monarda, nasturtium, petunia, phlox, physostegia, plumbago, purple coneflower, portulaca, Queen Anne's lace, rose, rudbeckia, salvia, sedum, snapdragon, spiraea, teucrium, thalictrum, veronica, verbena, vitex, wild flowers, yucca, and zinnia.



***Pink Promise* Rose Selected by National Breast Cancer Foundation**

One of the All-American Rose Selections for 2009, *Pink Promise*, has been selected by the National Breast Cancer Foundation to officially represent a continual blooming promise of compassion and awareness. A hybrid tea rose, *Pink Promise* is a graceful bloomer with long stems for cutting. Highly fragrant, with good disease resistance, this rose's beauty is enhanced by the contrast of its large pink blossoms set against lush dark green foliage. For every *Pink Promise* plant purchased, a percentage of the sales will be donated to the National Breast Cancer Foundation to help extend women's lives through education and early detection.

Perfect Containers All Year Long

Choose a large container, and plant a dwarf evergreen to anchor the seasonal arrangements. Add a grouping of three plants in six-inch pots; cover the still-potted plants with soil. Use the "rule of three" to select the plants each season: Three heights (trailing, mounding, and tall); textures (fine, medium, coarse); and shades of green (light, dark, variegated). Add to the group, one bloomer that is rotated seasonally (mums in fall, pansies in winter, and bulbs in spring). Planting annuals and keeping them confined to pots keeps them from competing with the evergreen's roots. When a plant finishes blooming, or dies, simply remove it and replace it with a fresher or different plant or ornament.

August Gardening Checklist

- ✂ **Plant autumn blooming bulbs now.** Colchicum, spider lily, fall-blooming crocus, saffron crocus and stembergia lutea.
- ✂ **Select spring blooming bulbs now** for planting by the end of August.
- ✂ **Prune woody evergreen shrubs (including grown hollies) before the end of August to protect new growth from being damaged by an early freeze.** Trim, to allow sunlight to reach the lower branches.
- ✂ **Do not prune spring-bloomers** like azalea, forsythia, camellia, dogwood, and rhododendron since their flower buds are forming now in preparation for next spring's bloom.
- ✂ **Perennials** may need cutting back for better appearance and to make room for late bloomers. Remove dead leaves. Prune plants to retain their space, particularly in fully planted beds.
- ✂ **Cut plants now for drying. Annuals:** gomphrena, larkspur, celosia, statice, stock and calendula. **Perennials:** achillea, alchemilla, artemisa, lamb's ear, limonium, miscanthus, pennisetum, liatris, and blue salvia. **Shrubs:** butterfly bush, hydrangea, cytissus, rose, and viburnum. During autumn, cut tall grass, reeds, cattail, and thistle. In winter, cut burning bush, evergreen branches, wild bittersweet, and winterberry holly. (Flowers with petals in bright shades of yellow, orange, pink, and blue preserve the best. Red and purple become darker and white turns tan very quickly.)
- ✂ **Insect deterrent or destruction.** First, use organic methods and beneficial insects. Plant bachelor's button to attract hover flies, ladybugs, lacewings, and beneficial wasp; Sweet alyssum to attract aphid-eating hover flies; Borage to attract all beneficials, particularly lacewings; Ornamental grasses over-winter ground beetles, ladybugs, and others. If insects persist and you must use chemical pesticides, carefully follow label directions. When storing pesticides, keep them in original containers for identification and proper application. Remember, when you apply chemical pesticides you kill the good bugs, too!
- ✂ **Prune and repot houseplants summering outdoors to allow time for them to become acclimatized before returning indoors this autumn.** Move all plants into the shade for gradual preparation for indoor lighting and possible shock that could result in leaf drop.
- ✂ **Dry herbs.** To retain most of the color, flavor and scent of growing herbs, make small harvest during autumn as opposed to one or two larger harvest in late summer. This will allow time for new growth on plants to harden and gather carbohydrates in preparation for winter. To ensure the highest concentration of essential oils, harvest before plants bloom. Spray plants with a hose the day before to clean off soil and dust. Harvest in the morning after the dew has dried to prevent mold. Dry appropriately and do not crush herbs until you are ready for use. (Herb hints: Savory can be used as a salt substitute in vegetable dishes. Add comfrey to the compost pile; its leaves are rich in nitrogen and will aid in the breakdown of dry material. Rub your hands with lavender leaves to remove strong odors, such as garlic or onion.)
- ✂ **Make cuttings of foliage plants for inside winter potting** during the latter part of August. Begonia, coleus, croton, plumbago and others.

- ✂ **Fertilize all plants regularly with liquid fertilizer only until end of this month.** Remember, if you fertilize too late and too heavily, new growth cannot prepare for winter.
- ✂ **Make plant selections for fall.** Roses, bulbs, perennials, grasses, shrubs and trees. Think about installing plants that have a dual purpose, such as fulfilling a design need and attracting wildlife. When making tree selections, remember all foliage is beneficial to reduce the effect of inhaled pollutants (which is worse in winter). However, coniferous evergreens retain their 'foliage' all year round, so they can be a very advantageous choice.
- ✂ **BE SURE TO STOP FERTILIZING BY THE END OF THIS MONTH!**

ADDING INTEREST TO THE GARDEN IN AUGUST



Aconitum, abelia, allium, althea, Artemisia, aster, astilbe, black-eyed Susan, boltonia, butterfly bush, canna, clematis, cleome, cosmos, crape myrtle, dahlia, dianthus, geranium, gladiolus, helenium, hemerocallis, hibiscus, hollyhock, hosta, hydrangea, impatiens, kniphofia, lantan, liatris, lobelia, lythrum, marigold, monarda, nasturtium, penstemon, petunia, phlox, physostegia, plumbago, purple coneflower, portulaca, Queen Anne's lace, rose, rudbeckia, sedum, snapdragon, spiraea, thalictrum, veronica, verbena, vitex, zinnia, wild flowers.

Bleeding Heart (or Lady's Locket) *Dicentra spectabilis*

English plant hunter Robert Fortune first 'discovered' the pink variety growing on the Island of Chusan and sent it to the Horticultural Society of London in 1846. By 1866, the Bleeding Heart was available in America. It soon became a staple of English and American Victorian gardens -- although it became rare and endangered in China! The Chinese reportedly used *Dicentra spectabilis* as we use our daisies today; but, instead of chanting, "he loves me; he loves me not," a hopeful maiden would crush one of the heart-shaped flowers. If it bled red, her love was returned. While pink Bleeding Heart is more familiar, Plant-a-Plant offers the lovely *Dicentra spectabilis* 'alba', which has two distinguishing features -- white heart-locket flowers and, in early spring, lime green leaves.

Dicentra cucullaria and *D. canadensis* (Dutchmen's Breeches) are native shade-loving perennials, and were also used by some Native American tribes to influence matters of the heart. Known as the 'enticer root', *Dicentra* was carried by a person contemplating making advances, and who would throw it at his intended as a sign of his interest. When fed to estranged couples, it would cause them to reconcile. For more practical matters, Indians fed *Dicentra* to their ponies to fatten them, and a poultice made from its roots was used to reduce both internal and external swellings.

***** Generic names are presented as such in the newsletter for the reader's ease only *****