



GARDENING TIPS FROM BLUE WILLOW AND LANDSCAPE ONTARIO

SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER

Gardening in the Autumn

1. Plant perennial chrysanthemums and asters for a late show of color.
2. Keep chrysanthemums well watered so they last longer.
3. Plant autumn crocus and colchicum for bloom this fall by mid-August until mid-September, foliage will grow next spring, slowly die back, then the plant will flower again next September and thereafter.
4. Take advantage of sales and plant trees, shrubs, evergreens and perennials. Keep plants moist while they're rooting and apply a thick layer of mulch over the root zone before winter.
5. Plant, divide or move herbaceous peonies in mid to late September.
6. Pruning trees, shrubs or evergreens is not recommended in fall as new growth may not have enough time to harden off before cold weather sets in.
7. Pot up geraniums and bring indoors while days are still warm. If you wait until late October, most or all of the foliage will turn yellow and drop off. Place in a sunny window.
8. Harvest all fruits and vegetables before heavy frost. Brussel sprouts and turnip can take small amounts of frost.
9. When potatoes are dry, store them in a dark place. Store carrots, beets, and turnips between layers of sand.
10. As perennial foliage deteriorates or is hit by frost, trim plants back close to ground level and compost the clippings.
11. Don't cut back lavender, ornamental grasses, Russian sage, or perennials with seed heads that can feed birds through winter. Prune in April.
12. Cover your water garden with mesh so leaves won't fall into the pool. Decaying leaves cause deadly methane gas and contribute to algae.
13. Remove pumps, jets, lights, transformer from water garden, clean and store for winter.
14. As summer flowering bulbs like canna and dahlia start to fade, dig them up, cut back the stems, label, dry out completely on newspaper dust with Wilson Bulb and Soil Dust, and store in dry peat moss in an open paper bag or cardboard box.
15. Plant garlic cloves 5 cm (2") deep and 10-15 cm (4-6") apart. Water well. Mulch heavily if there is a risk of the soil freezing before cloves have time to root.
16. Protect mature trees from caterpillar damage by wrapping a water-resistant band around the trunk and covering it with Tanglefoot. This sticky substance traps insects so they can't reach the canopy to lay their eggs.
17. Hang a bird feeder so you can enjoy backyard bird watching all winter long.



Bulbs For All Season

Spring-Flowering Bulbs:

Planted in fall, gardeners look forward to spring-flowering bulbs all winter. With some advance planning, you can choose from a vast array of spring bulbs to bloom in early, mid, and late spring. That way you can enjoy them well into May.

Early spring bloomers include Winter Aconites, Snowdrops, fragrant Puschkinia, Glory of the Snow, tiny Iris reticulata, Anemone blanda, and Crocus. Daffodils and Narcissi come next in various heights from 15 cm - 60 cm (6" - 24") and colours from traditional yellow to white, orange, and peach. Try under planting them with the intense blue of Grape Hyacinths or Scilla. Another great blue for the spring garden is Hyacinth which is also fragrant. They're also available in shades of pink and red as well as white, peach, and pale yellow.



Tulips come in 3 distinct groups depending on when they bloom early, mid, or late. Like Daffodils they're available in many heights but their colour range is much broader. The shape of the flower ranges from a large cup to a flat star, a fringed cup, a double that can look like a Peony, or a feathered specimen called "Parrot." Blooms can be held singly on strong stems or in clusters.

Towards the end of May an unusual bulb called Allium comes into flower. These "ornamental onions" have an exotic look and range in height from 30 cm - 125 cm (12" - 4')

Planting Spring-Flowering Bulbs:

These bulbs flourish in well-drained soil and will come back for a number of years when planted in lots of sun. Follow the package instructions for the proper planting depth and spacing of each bulb. Add Holland Bulb Booster, Bone Meal, or Super Phosphate to the planting area for bigger blooms. For a large "drift" effect, plant 30-50 of the same bulb. In foundation plantings, rock gardens, perennial, and mixed borders arrange in clumps of 7-12 bulbs or more. Don't plant in single rows as they fall over without the support of neighbors. For a naturalized effect in the lawn throw handfuls of Crocus or Daffodils and plant where they land. They will be finished flowering by the time the grass needs to be cut.

Always allow the foliage to die back naturally (sometimes it takes to the end of June). This process feeds the bulb that produces the flower for the following year. You can enhance the flowering of all your bulbs with an annual application of Holland Bulb Booster every spring.

Protection From Squirrels:

Unfortunately, squirrels adore spring-flowering bulbs and in autumn they're known to rearrange or completely remove your carefully arranged groups. Spray the bulbs themselves with a natural, bitter deterrent called Ropel or sprinkle Squirrel-Away over them before covering with soil.

Make another application of either product on top

of the soil. Or you can spread chicken wire over the area, peg it down firmly, and remove in spring when growth starts. This also keeps cats away. Squirrels don't like the taste of Daffodils, Narcissus, Allium, or Fritillaria.

The Daffodils and Narcissus need to be planted in September and early October because they

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require some rooting before cold weather, but all the rest can be planted just before the soil freezes up. In late November these pests aren't as busy and the ground will shortly be impenetrable.

Summer-Flowering Bulbs:

Dahlia, Canna, Tuberous Begonia, Gladiolus, Calla Lily, Crocosmia, Freesia, Dutch Iris, to name a few, are all tender bulbs, tubers, and corms that are purchased and planted in spring for blooming the same summer. They won't winter over if left outside. You can replace them the next year or lift them in fall and store inside to be replanted the following spring.

Summer-flowering bulbs can be planted in any border as well as in containers. Pendulous Tuberous Begonias make a colourful hanging basket for shade while Dwarf Dahlias form a bushy, floriferous plant in containers. The English have long known the tremendous value of Dahlias in their perennial borders because they bloom so well into October. Choose from many heights and flower shapes, sizes, and colours.

Gladioli are most often grown for cutting in August and aren't, therefore, a feature in main borders. They are frequently situated in a separate "cutting" garden. Cannas are now available in dwarf sizes so they can be used in more places, not just at the back of the border. Large, bold leaves are solid green or bronze and some are strikingly variegated.

Planting Summer-Flower Bulbs:

Plant at the proper depth, according to the package instructions, in well-drained soil. Add Parkwood™ Triple Blend or peat moss, compost, and manure to heavy clay. For earlier blooming, you can start bulbs, tubers, or corms indoors in March/April and transfer outside after all risk of frost has passed. Keep plants well watered during hot weather and feed about every 3 weeks with water-soluble Parkwood™ Flower Food 15-30-15.

Around mid to late October or whenever frost hits your summer-flowering bulb, dig it up, cut back all the flowers and foliage, and let it dry out completely on newspaper for 1-2 weeks.

Gently remove dried earth and coat with powdered Bulb Dust to kill insects and disease. Store in a cool, dry place in dry peat moss in an open paper bag, or cardboard box. Start the bulb inside in a light sterilized seed soil or plant directly into the garden around the May 24 weekend.

Fall-Flowering Bulbs:

When you're shopping in spring, pick up a summer-flowering bulb called Nerine. It blooms bright pink in September. Around mid-August, Sheridan Garden Centres carry fall-flowering Crocus and Colchicum. They can be planted immediately for bloom later in September. These unusual specimens will put on leaves the following spring.

Bulbs For Forcing Into Winter Bloom:

Fragrant Paperwhites and magnificent Amaryllis are well known for blooming inside when the weather is cold outside. They are available in fall. There are also specially prepared Hyacinths that can be "forced" into winter flowering. In addition, there is a designation on certain Crocus, Tulips, and Daffodils that states on the packaging "suitable for forcing."

Follow the planting instructions on the packaging and, in all cases, use a light, sterilized potting soil for indoor use with a layer of gravel or broken potshards at the bottom of your planter. Don't over water or you'll end up with long, floppy stems. Warmth and just a bit of moisture are enough to trigger flowering.

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