



The Spade & The Hoe

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August 2006

August Meeting

Our regular meeting will be held on Thursday, August 10th at 7:00 p.m. We will meet at Red's Garden Center, 3460 Dundee Road, for a tour and presentation on the top 10 perennials for sun and for shade. Join us at Red's for a fun evening. Their flowers are gorgeous!

Flower Family Album Gesnerias and Lobelias
Gloxinia and African Violet can be planted in window boxes that are sheltered from sun, wind and rain. Be sure to keep them moist! Lobelias are similar to bellflowers in leaf and seed habits, but their flower tube is split into ragged streamers. The tube is so long that only hummingbirds have a long enough tongue to reach the honey. Its members include vivid red Cardinal Flower (likes moist, shady places), native Blue Lobelia which is bright blue and also likes moist soil (the Indians thought it was a remedy for syphilis), and the annual edging lobelia which we use for borders, baskets and flower boxes. It also likes cool climates and plenty of moisture.

-The Flower Family Album
By Helen Field Fischer and
Gretchen Marshbarger

The July meeting had a surprise ending for one lucky member! Mr. Nicholson gave away a lush potted Double Knockout rose. He also gave away a container of bug killer. For the rest of us, we contented ourselves with his suggestions for growing roses month by month.

Chipmunks in the Pansies?

Critters digging up your plantings? They're just looking for either food or a new burrow. Often it's food. They're looking for seeds, nuts, fruits, berries, or bulbs. Keep the bird feeders away from flower beds and the from the house. Also, don't leave pet food outside (especially with coyotes, raccoons and foxes around here). Spray your plants with something like Invisible Fence (which works great with rabbits, deer and such). Also, according to the Chicago Tribune, cage the plants temporarily with chicken wire or leave moth balls on the soil surface (although that trick did not work for me). Another idea is to install children's pinwheels in the beds, but I think these creatures are not put off by that old hat.

Through the Garden Gate

After the mad rush to get the beds in tip-top shape for the Garden Walk, I am now getting around to trimming the shrubs, clearing out spreading perennials, and cutting out dead wood. Things are shaping up nicely.

All the rain we've been having has been beneficial for the beds, as I haven't had to supplement their water needs. The vegetables are growing well; I have loads of tomatoes on the vines and baked four loaves of zucchini bread this week. Angel's Trumpet is blooming up a storm! The roses love the moisture and present such a grand display. Lest you think my every moment is spent in the garden, I have made time for my book and a glass of wine in my chair where I can smell the jasmine and see all the butterflies on the flowers. Make sure you, too, stop daily to smell the roses and just drink in the beauty of your gardens.





The Flower Family— Bellflowers

Campanula means “little bells”. Usually blue though sometimes in white or pink, they all have alternate leaves and some have milky juice. Its members include Platycodon (balloon flower) which likes staking and is very late in spring to come up; Canterbury Bells have the largest and most fantastic blooms in the family and are biennial; Peachleaf Bellflower, so called because the leaves resemble peach leaves; Dane’s Blood, or campanula glomerata, is one of the showiest and easy to grow and has hairy leaves (it also spreads through underground roots); Carpathian Bellflowers, sometimes called White Clips and Blue Clips, is the best perennial edging plant that blooms from May until frost; Campanula isophylla, also called Star-of-Bethlehem is an early spring bloomer that spreads by tiny bulbs or seeds. Three natives are Tall Bellflower, Venus’ Looking-Glass and Harebell, which is famous as the Bluebells of Scotland. This native is found all over the world.

I think this is what hooks one on gardening: it is the closest one can come to being present at the Creation.

- Phyllis Theroux

A Question:

Perhaps it is now time for us to participate in some kind of community gardening. Perhaps we can plant a garden for others to enjoy, designing and maintaining gardens throughout the village. Maybe by a nursing home, the senior center, or perhaps weeding and planting flowers in an elderly person’s garden. You must have ideas to share on this thought. What about it? Let’s talk.

A shady garden on a hot summer day is a sensual oasis. And shade doesn’t have to mean just green—great splashes of color can thrive under trees or along the sheltered side of your home. Colorful shade-loving blooms include periwinkle, hardy geraniums, gloxinia, lady’s-mantle, honeybells, hosta, lily of the valley, daylilies, bleeding hearts, astilbe, hardy cyclamen, Virginia bluebells, hardy primrose, forget-me-nots, and violas.

- A Gardener’s Miscellany

In August, remember to:

- keep watering perennials and annuals, trees and shrubs;
- divide iris and re-plant rhizomes just below the soil surface;
- cut back straggly annuals to promote new growth;
- take cuttings of coleus, impatiens, wax begonias, rosemary, thyme and oregano to start indoors for a winter window garden;
- don’t prune trees and shrubs until early October;
- water tomatoes, peppers, squash, cucumbers and egg-plant deeply;
- plant a final crop of beans in early August;
- sow radish, lettuce, spinach, beet and turnip seeds later this month, keeping the seeds moist;
- keep after Japanese beetles until mid-August; consider applying a chemical to control grubs.

*- Chicagoland Gardening,
July/August 2006*



**Guest Columnist—
John Martin**

Early this spring I was talking to my neighbor and, at that time of the year, conversation seems to turn to gardening. He was telling me about an area in his backyard that's always wet due to the sump pump discharge. Nothing seems to grow there.

He has two problems, wet soil and part shade. I shared with him information that I gathered at a class at Chalet Nursery concerning plants that are tolerant of wet feet. I did some research and shared a list of shrubs, perennials and grasses that will grow in sun to part shade and are flood tolerant,

Shrubs: chokeberry (aronia spp.), Carolina Allspice (calycanthus floridus), bloodgood redbud (cornus alba bloodgood), gray dogwood (cornus racemosa), inkberry (ilex glabra), winterberry (ilex verticillata), spicebush (lindera benzoin) and willow (salix spp.).

Perennials: umbrella plant (darmera peltatum), hardy hibiscus (hibiscus spp.), yellow

flag iris (iris pseudacorus), Japanese iris (iris ensata), and variegated sweet flag iris (iris pallida variegata).

Grasses: found only one—sweet flag (acorus spp.).

Just the other day I stopped and talked with my neighbor and asked him if he had followed any of my suggestions. He indicated that he had and the plants have survived, however, his problem now is that the rabbits are eating them. Any suggestions???

(editor's note: Invisible Fence works great with rabbits.)

I judge that the flowers of lavender quilted in a cap and dayly worne are good for all diseases of the head that come of a cold cause and that they comfort the braine very well.

- William Turner, *A New Herball*
(1551)

Bay (laurus nobilis)

Bay leaves, berries and bark have been attributed with medicinal qualities. The pungent smell was thought to repel infection, so physicians would rub their hands with the oil after ministering to a sick patient. During outbreaks of plague, residents of ancient Rome burned bay oil in public places. The aromatic oil has long been used as a soothing rub for arthritis and rheumatism, to relieve earache and to lower blood pressure. It is antibacterial, anti-inflammatory, relaxing and soothing.

What's Blooming Table

Thanks to those who brought in flowers for our What's Blooming Table in July.

**Questions, comments,
payment of dues?**

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