

Arrowsmith Greenhouses

Nursery Notes



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We are open all
through the
labour day
weekend

How beautifully leaves grow old. How full of light and colour are their last days.
~John Burroughs

It was slow starting but summer arrived and has been glorious. But soon our annuals will start to look tired and the entire garden will look towards winter and its much needed rest. Of course there is one big event that as a gardener, we look forward to - the arrival of the spring bulbs. I liken it to when I was ten and got to go to the corner store with a quarter to buy candy. In those days the quarter bought 2 candy bars and you still had a nickel left over to buy a handful of penny candy. When I stand and look at the fresh bulb displays every fall I am transported back to the candy counter. The colours and variety are so enticing. The only difference being that instead of the instant gratification of biting into the Turkish Delight as soon as you step out of the store, you have to wait until spring but that just extends the anticipation. Our candy er bulb display will be ready for you sometime in the second week of September. Take a look in the newsletter for what you can look forward to.

We have a great selection of Winter veggies in right now.
Our new shipment of Rhodos arrives the last week of September.

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Ornamental Grasses

As our annuals start to look a little tired there is one group of plants that really starts to shine at this time of year and that is the Ornamental Grasses. From tiny little 6 inch varieties to towering statuesque Miscanthus. Grasses offer structure and interest right through until the first hard frost and many continue on well past that. Here are some varieties to watch for and put on your list of things you shouldn't live without.

The Miscanthus varieties should be right at the top of that list - they range from dwarf to giant - narrow to wide leaved and have an amazing ability to capture light.

Miscanthus sinensis 'Morning Light' - This is one of the oldest cultivated varieties of Miscanthus. It has a slight variegation which gives it a soft look. Growing to about 4 - 5 feet with pinkish seed heads.



Miscanthus sinensis 'Gracillimus' - A large grower to 80 inches tall. This is a great variety to use as a specimen, screen or hedge. The foliage is mid green with very nice fall colour.



Miscanthus sinensis 'Cosmopolitan' - This would be considered one of the giants growing to almost 9 feet. This variety is strongly variegated and definitely makes a statement as a specimen plant.



Many of the ornamental grasses are herbaceous but last well into the winter as long as they don't have too much snow on them. Even if they don't get too much snow they will still be ready to be cut down in late winter and will look their best if cut to about 6 inches from the ground. Some other garden worthy herbaceous grasses are listed on page 3

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Molinia arundinacea 'Skyracer' - This is a great specimen plant, meaning that they get lost if planted as a grouping but as single they are a shopstopper. It is lovely with its upright seed heads that capture light and dance beautifully in the breeze.



Skyracer

Stipa gigantea - Very large arching seed heads to 7 ft make this grass a great ornamental. The seed heads form in spring and as the summer progresses they turn a beautiful golden colour and last well into fall.



Stipa gigantea

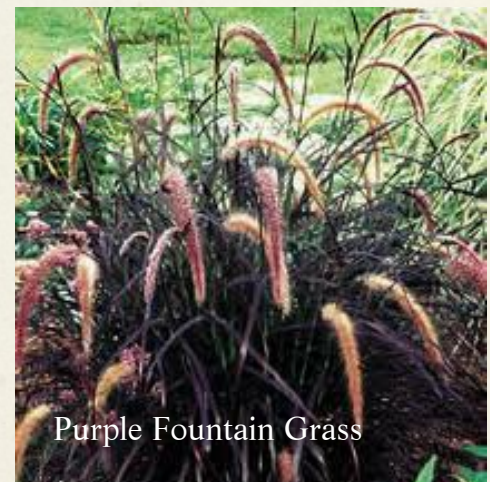
Stipa tenuissima - Also known as Pony Tail Grass and Mexican Feather Grass. The seed panicles resemble long blonde hair. A smaller grass to only 2.5 ft high and wide.



Stipa tenuissima

All of the above grasses are very hardy to our climate. There are a couple of less hardy grasses that can be grown as annuals and are well worth trying.

Pennisetum setaceum 'Rubrum' - Purple Fountain grass is probably the most popular of all ornamental grasses but unfortunately must be treated as an annual here. The good news is that you can start small and in one season the plant will reach an impressive size and flower well into fall and still look great sometimes as late as Christmas. It can be grown in ground or in a container. The purple foliage is a real standout.



Purple Fountain Grass



Vertigo

Pennisetum purpureum 'Vertigo' - Another lovely purple foliated annual grass. The lovely strap foliage is great as a centre piece for containers. It can also be used as border plants and will have better colour with more sun.

September - October Plant Profile

Hibiscus x moscheutos

This is definitely the Belle of the Ball in late August and September. It is hard to believe that anything this exotic looking could be hardy in our climate - but hardy it is and easy to grow. There are a few varieties available and each one has stunning 8-10" diameter flowers with maple leaf shaped leaves. This plant is herbaceous and starts to grow in late spring reaching a height of about 4 feet before putting on its amazing flower display. This Hibiscus requires full sun, average water and only requires a top dressing of compost or sea soil for fertilizer.



Kopper King shown left is noted for its dark foliage.

Old Yella opens pale yellow and fades to creamy white.



Fireball has flame red overlapping petals.

Bulbs for 2012

Once again we will be carrying bulbs from Van Noort Bulb Company. This years selections include:

Narcissus:

Missouri
Sound
Misty Glen
Bridal Crown
Golden Echo
Thalia
Jetfire
Baby Moon
Golden Bells
New Baby
Centanees



Tulip:

Yellow Wave
Little Beauty
Praetens Shogun



Allium:

Globemaster
Sphaerocephalon

Specialty:

Chionodoxa
Frittilaria
Muscari
Ornithogalum
Oxalis
Snowdrops
Triteleia
Camassia
Leucojum
Scilla



Combo Packages:

Double Bubble Allium
Double Delights Narcissus
Elegant Duet Tulips

The bulbs will be arriving in early September

Taking Geranium Cuttings

If you have ever over wintered your zonal geraniums you know that sometimes it is successful and other times not so much. Even when they do survive the winter, the following summer can produce very woody looking plants. The alternative is to take cuttings from your favourites. The cuttings are best taken in late August and early September.

1. Select the healthiest, most vigorous stems and cut them at about 4-5 inches. The cut should be made with a sharp sterilized cutting tool. To sterilize - a good wipe down with bleach will do the trick.



2. Remove all but the top 2-3 leaves.

3. Dip the cutting in a #1 rooting hormone and tap off any excess. (Do not dip into the container but pour a bit onto a dish and dip into that.)

4. Prepare your soil mix. A seed starting mix or sterilized jiffy pots.



5. Poke a hole with a pencil into the soil and pop the cutting in.

6. Water lightly taking care not to let water sit around the base of the cutting.

7. The cuttings will root in 3 - 4 weeks. When you give a light tug on the cutting if it has rooted it will not move. At this point you can pot the cuttings up to a larger pot. Usually a 4 inch pot will be fine to get the cutting through the winter.

8. Place the cuttings in a sunny window and lightly water through the winter.

To Do List

September

- Now is the time to prune Birches and Maples as they will not bleed at this time of year.
- Give Hedges a final light trim in early September. If you do it early enough you will get a light flush of new growth to protect for the winter.
- If you want to increase your peonies now is the time to divide. Only doing this if necessary as peonies can live many, many years without being divided.
- Continue fertilizing annuals as they should last well into October.
- Maintain vigilance when it comes to watering as this is the critical time for plants heading into winter. If plants are dry heading into cold weather they can suffer damage.
- Towards the end of September bulbs can be planted if the temperatures are not too high. If we are getting temperatures in the 20's then it is best to wait until October.
- Plant fall and winter veggies.



Betula pendula

October

- As we start to get frosty mornings the annuals will begin dying off. As they do clean and mulch the annual beds.
- October is the prime bulb planting month. Prepare the beds with compost before planting.
- Dig, divide, and replant perennials to improve their vigour and to increase numbers.
- Apply lime and a fall fertilizer to the lawn.
- This is a great month to plant trees and shrubs as the plants will root in all winter and need less care and watering the following spring.
- As the leaves start to yellow on Dahlias, Begonias, Cannas and any other tender summer bulbs they should be dug up and stored for the winter.
- We will close October 31 for the winter and will reopen February 18, 2013.



Acer "October Glory"

A Garden Story

This month we are taking a glimpse into the garden of Kathy Claxton and Frankie Michaluk. Kathy and Frankie have been gardening on the property for 3 years. Located in the Columbia Beach area they are blessed with the mild onshore flow but also cursed with the strong winds that are associated with this area. As avid collectors of plants the biggest challenge that these two face is that they have to garden within the confines of 1/3 acre. They still manage to grow an impressive number of fruit trees, berries and many many varieties of tomatoes, along with ornamental trees and perennials.



May 2009



August 2012



June 2009



August 2012



August 2009



August 2012