



# The Ladyslipper



Perth & District Horticultural Society

[www.perthhortsociety.com](http://www.perthhortsociety.com)

Est. 1984

P.O. Box 494  
Perth, ON K7H 3G1

October 2021



## **PRESIDENT'S PEN**

*The broadest, and maybe the most meaningful definition of volunteering: Doing more than you have to because you want to, in a cause you consider good.*

~Ivan H. Scheier (1926-2008)

This month is all about thankfulness and gratitude. I am truly thankful to all of our volunteers for donating their time to our society.

A special thank you to Lynda Haddon as the Community Garden Coordinator for organizing the community gardens volunteer program and for liaising with the town. Thank you to all of our community gardens volunteers. In total they volunteered 487 hours of their time to beautify the Cenotaph, Flag Garden, Museum Garden, and the restoration of the gardens at Inge Va.

To all the members of the Board of Directors, I want to thank you for providing your time and talents in the running of the society. I especially want to thank three members who have decided to take a step back from the board for 2022. Catherine, Janet and Sandi, accept my gratitude for all that you have done for our society. We wouldn't have achieved our success without your help. I am thrilled to have had you on the team. You were simply incredible. Catherine volunteered as

our secretary keeping us organized. She also did the Speaker Program list for 2021. She organized the members garden tours this past year. Janet has been our Membership Coordinator for many years and did a great job of setting up the records to easily pass on to her predecessor. Sandi served as a director at large, helping out in many areas, advocating for the society at every opportunity - Junior Gardeners program, collecting prizes for meetings, yearbook cover design, creating special cards for different occasions. These three ladies will be truly missed.

That being said, we need to fill these positions on the board. So here is my question to you: *Would you like to join the board?*

The Board of Directors is responsible to running the society and organizing the activities, and to advocate for the society within the community.

We meet eight times a year - the Tuesday before each of our meetings for an hour or two in the months that we have meetings. So no meetings in December or January, July and August. We welcome you to join us to continue the success of the Perth & District Horticultural Society. Please contact me by email at [perthhortpres@gmail.com](mailto:perthhortpres@gmail.com) for more details or questions.

Our November meeting will be on the third Tuesday instead of the second and we will have our Annual General Meeting and a demonstration on Christmas Urns by Gemmells.

Happy October!

*Linda*



# Congratulations David Archer

## Recipient of the 2021 OHA District 2 Service Award

By Linda Bartlett and Jane Avery



Pictured left to right in Perth Flag Garden: Linda Bartlett, Anne Harbord, David Archer and Madeline Archer.



David with the dahlias in his garden

David has been a member of the PDHS since 1994. He served on the Board as a director for six years from 2000 to 2006 during which time he was the President for two years (2003-04), and again as a director on the board from 2012 to 2017. Presently, he is serving the District as Assistant District Director. He served as Assistant District Director for two years previously (2010-11) as well.

As a member of the PDHS, he has coordinated our annual plant sale since 2011 as well as contributing 100s of plants to the sales. He spearheaded the PDHS Rose Fertilizer fundraiser back in 2012 and continues to do so every year since.

He has worked on the Perth Community Gardens including Inge Va, Cenotaph and Flag gardens for many years. He has organized the plants for the flag garden even growing a lot of the plants himself. He has also been on the committee at both the Provincial and Federal Community in Blooms twice.

He has been dedicated to our Junior Gardeners program in the Perth & District public schools for over fifteen years as a lead in the classroom.

He is also an OHA accredited judge. He has helped co-ordinate many Judges updates. He taught a horticultural section in the 2009-10 Judging school. He was Show Chair at the PDHS Flower Show in 2007. He has exhibited and been successful in many District and convention flower shows.

He staged the flower show competition at the OHA Convention in Ottawa in 2006, creating many of

the staging himself. Since then he has staged three flower shows in District 2 and one in District 3.

David is a wildly enthusiastic organizer of flower shows. While big shows are highly competitive, he finds participants to be a helpful, friendly bunch. Shows include horticultural classes show casing how well entrants grow a variety of plants, fruit, vegetables, and flowers, while design classes focus on the art of display. David takes flower judging seriously. He is proud to uphold the rigorous tenants of the role.

David and his wife Madeline are busy getting ready for the 2023 Ontario Horticultural Association Convention being hosted by District 2 at the stunning Brookside Hotel in Kanata.

*A judge is expected to be of the highest integrity, knowledgeable, experienced, impartial, decisive, logical, tactful, and has a duty to uphold high standards of flower arrangement, to update knowledge continuously, to encourage exhibitors and to be prepared to explain decisions to the general public.*

Source: The Flower Arranger's A-Z, by Daphne Vagg

An advertisement for Sylvia's 4th Line Florals. The background is a close-up of pink and white roses. The text is written in a cursive font. The contact information is in a sans-serif font.

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# How to Grow Garlic in the Fall

Source: Wiki How

Garlic is a very beloved part of many dishes and can be readily found at most grocery stores. You can take your cooking to the next level by planting and growing your very own garlic. Even if you don't have a lot of gardening experience, you will find that garlic is a low-maintenance plant that is easy to grow. Garlic can be grown in the ground or in a pot, and it's ready to harvest in mid to late summer.



## Preparing the Soil

1. Find a well-lit bed of soil where you can plant your garlic. While you don't have to live on a farm to plant your own garlic, you will need a designated space for the cloves to grow. Find an area of loose soil to use when planting your garlic cloves.

If you do not have space to grow garlic outside, you should be able to find soil, planting containers, and other garden supplies at any store that sells gardening tools.

2. Pull out all weeds from the soil. Weeds will steal valuable nutrients from the growing garlic, which may have a negative effect on the crop's quality. Adding mulch later on will help to keep any weeds from growing around the garlic plants.
3. Apply a layer of compost to the soil. Composting involves taking natural materials and reusing them as a source of nutrients for soil. Save any organic trash to use for your compost layer (i.e., coffee grounds, eggshells, teabags). Use a scoop to evenly spread the compost into the soil.



It does not matter how much compost you use, as long as it is evenly spread throughout the soil.

4. Add slow-growing fertilizer to the soil bed. You want to add 2 tablespoons of fertilizer to each spot where you plan to plant a garlic clove, as this will provide your garlic with nourishment. Since the garlic is planted before winter, you don't want your plants to be sprouting in the middle of December.

Don't worry about not using enough fertilizer. In the warmer spring months, you will have plenty of time to give your garlic plants more.

## Planting the Cloves

1. Assemble individual garlic cloves for planting. Unlike other common fruits and vegetables, garlic does not have a traditional seed. Instead, you will plant a garlic clove. Remove the outer layer of skin from a normal garlic plant to reveal the cloves inside. Don't remove the skin from any of the small cloves.

Determine if you are planting softneck or hardneck garlic cloves. While similar, these two types of garlic have distinct differences between clove quantity and overall storage time.

Planting larger cloves is likely to yield a larger garlic plant.

Buy your garlic cloves from a plant nursery or seed company to ensure that the cloves are compatible with the soil in your area.

2. Wait for the first autumn frost to occur. Unlike other plants, garlic requires a cold temperature in order to grow properly. Planting your garlic in the fall will allow your plants to get cold naturally.

If you live in a colder region, you should wait up to 3 weeks after the first fall frost before planting your garlic.

3. Plant the cloves at least 4 inches (10 cm) apart in the soil bed. You will want to ensure that your garlic has plenty of room to grow by



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placing each clove at least 4 inches (10 cm) apart. The rows of garlic should be at least 8 inches (20 cm) apart.

If you are planting hardneck cloves, make sure that they are planted in an upright position. Softneck cloves can be planted with more flexibility.

4. Cover the cloves with 2 inches (5.1 cm) of soil. Garlic does not need to be planted deeply, so you only need to push about 2 inches (5.1 cm) into the soil to plant the clove. Depending on how wet your soil is, you can place your cloves closer to the surface and put 2 inches (5.1 cm) of soil on top of them.
5. Monitor the soil's moisture levels and water it when necessary. Every few days, touch the soil with your fingers to make that it's not dry. Garlic plants do not need to be watered unless the weather is abnormally dry. Only add water to the plants as needed.

It's normal to see small sprouts appearing from the garlic before the winter season. This won't affect their quality when it comes time to harvest.

### Adding the Mulch

1. Create mulch from leftover leaves and grass in your yard. Since the garlic plants will be in the ground for the entirety of the winter, you will want to insulate them with a layer of mulch. You can use dead leaves and cut grass to create your own mulch, or you can purchase it from any store that sells gardening supplies.  
You can also use a wood chipper to create your own mulch.
2. Place a layer of mulch over the fertilized soil. Once you have enough mulch, begin layering it on top of the soil. Ideally, the mulch layer should be at least 4 inches (10 cm) deep, especially if you live in a colder area.
3. Put a layer of straw on top to insulate the mulch. Adding a layer of straw on top of the mulch will provide your garlic plants with extra protection from the cold winter weather.

Remove any excess shoots that begin to appear in the spring, as they decrease the size of your harvested garlic.

### Harvesting and Curing Garlic

1. Harvest when the tops turn yellow and begin to die off. At the end of the growing season, in July or August, the tops of the garlic plants will start looking yellow and begin to fall over and die. This means it's time to harvest the garlic.

Don't harvest the garlic too late in the season – the bulbs will shrivel and the garlic won't be good to eat.

Garlic harvested too early won't cure properly.

2. Remove the bulbs from the ground without breaking them. Use a spade to dig around the garlic bulbs without breaking through the cloves. Brush off excess dirt. You can leave the garlic stem attached to the bulb.
3. Let the bulbs cure for 2 weeks. Before you use the garlic, it's necessary to let it cure. During this time the skin will dry and the bulb will become firm. Store the harvested garlic in a cool, dry place for curing.

You can cut off the stem and cure the garlic bulbs individually in a storage bin. Make sure they get plenty of air circulation.

Another common way to cure and store garlic is to leave the stems attached and braid them, then hang the garlic in a cool, dry place.

You can also cure your garlic by hanging the cloves upside down in a warm, shaded area with the leaves attached.

4. Use the garlic when the skin is dry and papery. The cloves should be firm to the touch, and easy to pull apart.
5. Save the best bulbs for next season's planting. Pick out a few large bulbs to plant in the fall before the ground freezes. Choose the best-looking bulbs to ensure that next season's plants are big and flavorful.



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# HARVEST RECIPES

## Mom's Zesty Carrots with Horseradish

By Pete Plumber for allrecipes

*"This is one of mom's perennial holiday dishes for Thanksgiving & Christmas".*

Yields 8 servings

### Ingredients:

- 1 ¼ pounds carrots, cut into matchsticks
- ½ cup mayonnaise
- 2 tablespoons grated onion
- 2 tablespoons freshly ground horseradish
- ½ teaspoon salt (scant)
- ¼ teaspoon ground black pepper (scant)
- ¼ cup dry seasoned breadcrumbs
- 2 tablespoons melted butter



### Directions

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees F (190 degrees C).

Place carrots in a pot and add water to cover. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat to a simmer and cook until tender, 6 to 8 minutes. Drain carrots, reserving 1/4 cup of the cooking liquid. Transfer carrots to a shallow baking dish.

Mix reserved cooking water, mayonnaise, onion, horseradish, salt, and pepper together in a small bowl until combined; pour over carrots.

Bake in the preheated oven for 15 minutes.

Meanwhile, toss breadcrumbs in melted butter. Sprinkle over carrots and bake until crumb topping is crisp, an additional 3 to 5 minutes.

Nutrition Facts Per Serving: 169 calories; protein 1.4g; carbohydrates 10.2g; fat 14.2g; cholesterol 12.9mg; sodium 317.9mg.

## Pumpkin Cheesecake

Source: Tastes of Home

Total time: Prep 20 mins + chilling  
Bake 55 mins + cooling 70 mins

Makes 16 servings

### Ingredients

#### **Crust:**

- 1 cup graham cracker crumbs
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 1/4 cup butter, melted

#### **Filling:**

- 2 packages (8 ounces each) cream cheese, softened
- 3/4 cup sugar
- 2 large eggs, room temperature, lightly beaten
- 1 can (15 ounces) solid-pack pumpkin
- 1-1/4 teaspoons ground cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon ground ginger
- 1/2 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 1/4 teaspoon salt

#### **Topping:**

- 2 cups sour cream
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 12 to 16 pecan halves, chopped

### Directions

In a small bowl, combine the graham cracker crumbs and sugar; stir in butter. Press into the bottom of a 9-in. spring form pan; chill.

For filling, in a large bowl, beat cream cheese and sugar until smooth. Add eggs; beat on low speed just until blended. Stir in the pumpkin, spices and salt.

Pour into crust. Place pan on a baking sheet. Bake at 350° for 50 minutes.

Meanwhile, for topping, combine the sour cream, sugar and vanilla until smooth. Spread over filling; return to the oven for 5 minutes. Cool on rack for 10 minutes. Carefully run a knife around the edge of pan to loosen; cool 1 hour longer.



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Refrigerate overnight. Remove sides of pan. Top with chopped pecans. Refrigerate leftovers.

## PUMPKIN CHEESECAKE TIPS

*How can you guarantee a smooth and creamy cheesecake?*

When making cheesecake, using room temperature cream cheese and eggs is absolutely critical. Room temperature ingredients blend up smoothly so you don't have a lumpy cake. Use a good hand or stand mixer and you'll be set for a smooth, creamy cheesecake.

*How can you prevent cracking in this pumpkin cheesecake?*

Even if the recipe doesn't call for it, our Test Kitchen recommends using a water bath for baking cheesecake. Water baths help cheesecakes bake gently and evenly, plus the steam from the hot water creates a nice humid environment for baking. Humidity while baking will help prevent dreaded cracks. Also, when mixing your batter make sure to add the eggs in last. The longer you mix the eggs, the more air you incorporate into the batter. The air can expand and then contract during baking and cooling, which can cause cracks.

### Nutrition Facts

1 slice: 230 calories, 15g fat (9g saturated fat), 70mg cholesterol, 164mg sodium, 20g carbohydrate (15g sugars, 2g fiber), 4g protein.



## Beet Ginger Mule

Source Food & Drink Autumn 2021

*"I love this harvest cocktail recipe, made with beets from The Table Community Garden"- Jane Avery*

Zesty from the ginger and earthy from the beet, this version of a classic Moscow Mule is unforgettably vibrant.

2 oz vodka

1 oz freshly squeezed lime juice

5 to 6 oz Beet Ginger Beer (recipe follows)

Splash carbonated water (optional)

1 lime peel or wedge for garnish

Pour vodka and lime juice into a crushed ice filled mule or large rocks glass. Top with Beet Ginger Beer. Stir to mix. Taste and add carbonated water if you like. Garnish rim of glass with lime peel or wedge.



## Beet Ginger Beer

Feel free to use this recipe in place of the usual ginger beer in other cocktails as well.

1/2 cup (125 ml) freshly grated ginger, about 2 large pieces

1 large beet, peeled and coarsely chopped

1 cup (250 ml) lightly packed yellow brown sugar

3 cups (750 ml) water

1 cup carbonated water

Place ginger, beet, sugar in a large saucepan. Pour water over top. Stir to mix. Set over medium-high heat. When mixture is boiling around the edges (this will take about 7 minutes), reduce heat to medium-low. Gently simmer, stirring occasionally and adjusting heat as needed, for 10 minutes more. Remove from heat. Let stand for 1 hour.

Strain through a fine-mesh sieve into a pitcher. If making ahead, mixture will keep well, covered and refrigerated, for up to 4 days. Just before serving, top with carbonated water. Stir to mix. Once carbonated water has been added, ginger beer will keep, covered and refrigerated, for up to 12 hours.

Makes 3 1/2 cups (875 ml) Beet Ginger Beer for approximately 6 Mules.

**TIP:** Make a 6-serving batch by pouring Beet Ginger Beer into a very large pitcher or punch bowl. Stir in 12 oz vodka and 6 oz lime juice. Taste and add more carbonated water if you like.



# Downtown Perth Pharmasave store celebrates 175th year as newest location opens

Condensed from article that appeared in Perth Courier Sept 29, 2021 by Desmond Devoy

Becky Bellamy has grown up with the Perth Pharmasave — going from high school student who got her start at the downtown location, pricing inventory by hand, to co-owner of both locations, sharing duties with her former boss, Pam Newton.

Newton arrived in Canada from Britain in 1969 and started work as a pharmacist in 1973. In 1985, Newton bought the Pharmasave and extended the store in 1991.

“It’s all a blur!” Said Bellamy from her office at the new store on Tuesday, Sept. 14, referring to the period from hearing about expanding the business to the south end, to finally



opening on July 27. “It’s been challenging. (But) I think we have done a good job.”

She pointed out that “we share a team,” between Pharmasave’s two locations, the new location at the new Tay River Health Centre at the intersection of Rideau Ferry Road and South Street, and the Pharmasave Perth Downtown at 57 Foster St. “We go back and forth.”

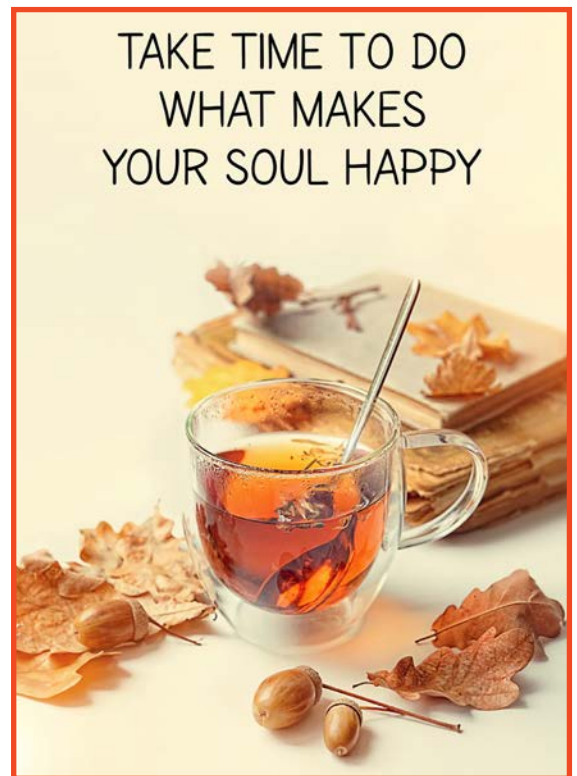
Newton credits their success over the years in part to “very faithful customers ... we’ve always tried to provide very personalized



service. We know your mom. We probably know your children. Your grandparents came here.” Bellamy hopes that the new store will develop the same friendly vibe as the Foster Street location.

The downtown location is “the oldest pharmacy in the same location in Canada,” said Newton, being founded in 1846. The stone building it currently resides in at that site was built in 1871.

An advertisement for Images InterAlia. The top part has a purple background with the logo "Images InterAlia". Below that, a list of services is provided: "business cards \* wedding invitations \* flyers \* large and regular format \* photocopies \* stationary \* binding \* postcards \* scanning \* graphic design \* brochures \* canvas \* laminating \* photo restoration \* art reproduction". Contact information is listed: "Tel: 613-267-0078", "info@imagesperth.com", "www.imagesperth.com", and "50 North Street Perth ON". At the bottom, the logo "Images InterAlia" is repeated with the tagline "Graphic Design Studio and Print Shop".



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# INTRODUCING THE TULIP – TULIPA

Insights from The Garden Primer by Barbara Damrosch

A yard erupting in lavish tulip blooms looks like a jeweled crown. There are so many wonderful tulips that it's tempting to tuck them in everywhere. But if you do this, keep in mind that the broad, straplike leaves will be conspicuous long after the jewels are gone, becoming more and more unsightly as they start to turn brown. You'd have to either live with that or treat tulips as annuals by getting rid of the leaves after bloom and ending the plants' growth. Tulip leaves can be deliberately hidden by bushy annuals, perennials, or ground covers. My solution is to plant them far enough away that I can see all the bright spots of colour but not the denouement that follows. I also find that the back of a perennial garden is an excellent spot. The tulips bloom early and are quickly hidden as the perennials make their ascent.

Buying tulips can be confusing unless you know the difference types. Here are the major tulip groups:



**Early-flowering tulips:** These start blooming soon after crocuses. They include single tulips that grow up to 16 inches and doubles that grow up to a foot. The gold-orange single *'General de Wet'* is a fine example. *'Peach Blossom'* is an appealing heirloom with double pink flowers.

**Mid-season tulips:** These include the single Mendel and Triumph tulips, which grow 16 to 26 inches tall, and the big Darwin Hybrids. These grow 30 inches, stand well in bad weather and are quite long-lived as tulips go. They come in many colours. *'Apeldoorn'* is a bright orange-red.



**Late-flowering tulips:** This group includes Darwin tulips (not to be confused with Darwin Hybrids), which are shaped like an egg that is slightly squared off at the bottom and grow 22 to 30 inches tall. The Lily-flowered tulips, such as the pink *'Mariette,'* are shaped like a vase that comes in at the neck and then flares out again in points, and grow 18 to 26 inches tall. Cottage tulips have a compact egg shape. Parrot tulips, which grow 20 to 22 inches tall, are fantastically showy with twisted, ruffled, or fringed petals (plant the spectacular deep-purple *'Black Parrot'* with some white parrots for a striking combination). The spectacular Rembrandt tulips are "broken", that is, striped or spotted; the colours are combinations of red, yellow, or white. For a lovely, more subtle effect, plant the Green tulips (also called *Viridiflora*), which are variations on pink and red or white with green streaks at the base of the petals. The Double Late tulips, also called Peony-flowered tulips, have big, many-petaled flowers and grow 2 feet tall or less. The pink-and-cream *'Angelique,'* an old favorite, is in this group.



**Botanical tulips:** Somewhat closer to the original species than those described above, this group is composed of long-lived, fairly short stemmed, early-blooming hybrids, usually with decorative mottled foliage. These include Kaufmanniana, also called Water Lily tulips, which have open-spreading, pointed petals with bright, striking colour combinations. They grow 4 to 8 inches tall. Fosteriana tulips, with very large, brilliantly coloured flowers, grow 12 to 18 inches tall. Greigii tulips, which range from 8 to 20 inches tall, bloom later with bright yellow and red petals.

**Species tulips:** This group of small bulbs is a large one. There are well over 100 species of wild tulips growing in the world, and quite a number of them are sold commercially. Perhaps this reflects a growing interest in smaller, simpler, more natural plants as opposed to large, showy, extensively crossed ones. Yet most of the species tulips offered are now selections or hybrids of wild forms, just as the Botanical tulips are, making them an even more diverse group, with a WIDE COLOUR SELECTION. Nonetheless, they retain much of the wildflower look. Most species tulips are low growing, though



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the flowers are often just as large, bright, and showy as the classic garden hybrids. Most (although not all) are early flowering. One of their main attractions is their performance and ease of care. Easily naturalized, they tend to come back year after year and even spread. Some are fair-weather flowers, folding up their petals on cloudy days and at day's end, but they are colourful even when closed. They require well-drained soil (dry in summer) and do best without major competition from other plants. Many have several blooms per stem and look great in rock garden settings.



*Tulipa tarda* (and the very similar *T. dasystemon*) is one of the most long-lived tulips. The flowers are starlike and bright yellow, tipped with white. *T. batalinii* is also yellow but varieties are shaded with other colours. The various forms of *T. clusiana* (lady tulip) and *T. linifolia* tend to be red. *T. praestans* 'Fusilier' is a popular red-orange with multiple flowers on the stem. *T. bakeri* 'Lilac Wonder' is a popular rosy-lavender variety. The very low-growing *T. humilis* (*T. pulchella*) comes in many colours. Species tulips are very cold hardy.

## ***Tulip Growing Know How from Veseys.com***

### **Where to Plant:**

The most important rule when planting bulbs is to choose an area that is well-drained. Most bulbs will rot or deteriorate quickly where soil is constantly damp. Most bulbs thrive in full sun, or at least 5-6 sunny hours daily. Within each individual bulb or perennial variety it is stated what type of light conditions are preferred.

### **Planting Bulbs General Info**

Plant bulbs individually by digging a hole for each bulb with a trowel or bulb planter, or place several bulbs on the bottom surface of a larger hole, then cover with soil. As planting depths and spacing varies depending on the type of bulb, refer to the cultural information found later in this guide.

Be sure to loosen the soil at the bottom of the hole and work in a handful of organic fertilizer such as Veseys Bulb Fertilizer. Then press each bulb firmly into the soil, top pointing up and fill in the hole. When in doubt as to which way is up on a bulb, plant it on its side and let 'Mother Nature' decide!



### **Planting (Fall is the time!)**

Plant tulips about 6" to 8" deep measuring from the base of the bulb. If you add mulch after planting, include this as part of your overall planting depth. Deeper planting (8"-12") will prolong the life of many of the later varieties, especially the Darwin Hybrids, for several years. Space bulbs 4"-6" (9 bulbs/sq.ft.-5 bulbs/sq.ft.) a part. If tulip bulbs send up leaves with no flowers, it's time to replace them.

### **Growing**

Plant in full sun. At least 6 hours of direct sun per day. Though too much water is not good, sufficient water at the time of planting is necessary to get them growing and to ensure the start of a strong root system. Always grow tulips in well-drained and airy soil. Wet and/or compacted soil promotes fungus and disease and can cause bulbs to drown out due to suffocation. Adding compost or other organic matter to soil will make it drain better. We recommend raised beds in wetter areas and suggest that you have at least a 10" depth of loose airy soil. Proper soil drainage is very important when planting bulbs. After the tulips have passed their peak, remove the flower stalk to prevent seed



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formation and let the leaves die down normally. Leaves should be allowed to ripen for at least six weeks after blooming. This will help the new bulblets grow bigger. Fertilize in early spring or fall with a low nitrogen fertilizer such as Bulb Fertilizer or top-dress with rotted manure or compost.

**Note on Perennializing Tulips:** How well tulips grow in future years (perennialize) depends a lot on the cultural conditions in your garden. Tulips are indeed true perennials, but they need the cold winters and hot, DRY summers of their native foothills of the Himalayas, or the steppes of eastern Turkey. By choosing carefully among the wide selection of tulip varieties, you can enjoy successive bloom for at least six weeks. Do not water or fertilize during the summer.

### Vase Life Tricks for Tulips

Excerpt from Floret Farm's Cut Flower Garden by Erin Benzakein with Julie Chai

Tulips are naturally a very-long lasting cut flower. Store bought stems generally persist for 4 to 5 days, but homegrown varieties can easily hold for up to 10 days in the vase. For the longest display inside, harvest when the flowers are still in bud with just a hint of colour showing on the outer petals. Because tulips have a tendency to bend and curve right after harvest, wrap the top two-thirds of the flowers in a funnel of paper and stand them upright in water for a few hours. Once fully hydrated, they will stand much straighter in the vase. Keep in mind that once placed in water, fresh-picked stems will elongate during the first few days, so if you're adding them to an Arrangement, nestle the flowers down deeper than you ultimately want them to be. Flower preservative will prolong the vase life of tulips and keep the petals vibrant and richly coloured.



### Comfrey Tea

Question from Member

#### **Can comfrey tea be kept over the winter?**

You can definitely have Comfrey Tea in the winter. The Comfrey plant is only hardy to zone 4 so it will freeze in our climate. You will have to start now to gather and dry your comfrey leaves while they are fresh and before they freeze. Gather the comfrey stalks after the dew has dried in the morning so you are starting with dry plants. Gather 6 large stalks in a bundle and tie. While you can tie with twine, elastic is a better choice because as the water evaporates from the stalks the elastic holds it together longer. Hang the stalks in an airy spot out of the sun and damp. If you are doing it outside, you will need to bring it indoors in the evening to avoid moisture.

When comfrey is dry, it will crush easily in your hands. You can test its dryness by putting some in a sealed glass jar in the sun. If moisture develops on the inside of the jar, it is not quite dry enough. Once it is completely dry, store in a cannister or glass jar.

If you have a dehydrator, you can use it to dry your leaves. In this case, remove the leaves from the stalks and dry as per your dehydrator instructions.

### My New Favorite Tool

From MaryAnn Van Berlo, Master Gardener, Ottawa Carleton



A reciprocating saw is my new best tool for dividing woody rooted perennials such as this *Miscanthus sinensis* (ornamental grass). I used the saw to cut around the root clump first and then made a big X cut to divide the

clump into quarters. Then each quarter got slowly loosened by prying the shovel under the roots. It was still a couple hours of work but the saw cut through those tough roots that the shovel couldn't. **NOTE:** I had cut off the top growth a week prior, also with the reciprocating saw (hard to believe there was that much new growth in a week). **IMPORTANT:** the 9" pruning saw blade is best for this job -- don't use your spouse's GOOD blade.

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## Simple things to do in the fall to keep your garden happy and healthy.

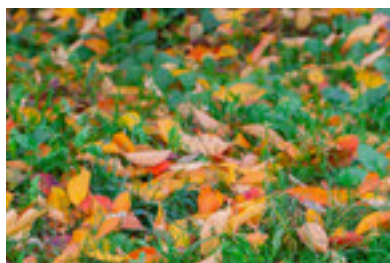
By Larry Hodgson, *The Laidback Gardener*

As a laidback gardener, I'm certainly not going to be writing about "closing the garden" in the fall, although many people use that term. A garden is a living environment, always evolving, and is as active in fall and even winter as in summer. You never "close" it: there's always something going on, even though that activity might be mostly microbial or underground.

Still, there are a few small jobs you would do best to carry out in the fall in preparation for winter, but nothing really terribly exhausting.

Lawn mower shredding and collecting leaves on a lawn.

Don't allow too many leaves to accumulate on the lawn.



Don't leave the lawn covered in leaves. Leaf removal is the most important fall job for most gardeners. A few leaves on the lawn are not a problem:

just ignore them. But a lawn covered with leaves no longer has access to the sun. And whether your lawn is made up of turf, clover, thyme, or a mixture of plants, it still has to photosynthesize through the fall in order to remain healthy. Leaving it in deep shade under leaves through much of the fall will weaken it and leave it in poor shape come spring.

The easiest way to deal with leaves is simply to shred them with the lawn mower. Often, the tiny bits of leaves will then fall to the ground through the blades of grass. If so, they no longer block the light, but instead enrich the soil. Problem solved!

However, sometimes there are too many leaves for that. If so, mow the lawn to shred the leaves, but this time attach the mower bag to collect them. The shredded leaves you harvest can go into the compost bin, be mixed into the soil of the vegetable garden or flower border to enrich

it, serve as mulch or be put aside (I store them in trash bags) for different uses in the spring.

Divide perennials if they need it. It's a great season to do so.

Plant new shrubs, trees, evergreens and perennials. Especially since there are often significant discounts in garden centers in the fall. It's best to plant them at least 3 to 4 weeks before the ground freezes.

Plant hardy bulbs. Tulips, daffodils, crocuses, etc. Garlic too. Again, ideally a few weeks before the ground freezes.

Dig up, dry and store tender bulbs indoors. Dahlias, cannas, tuberous begonias, gladioli, etc. Or let them freeze and buy new ones next spring.

Cut back perennials? A useless task invented by overly zealous gardeners to keep themselves busy in the fall. Yet, the less you disturb your perennials in the fall, the healthier they'll be in the spring, because their leaves, even though they may be dying, protect them against the cold. Most perennial leaves decompose over the winter anyway, so there is essentially nothing left to clean up in the spring. And if the leaves are still there, they're now mulch and highly beneficial.

Pull out annual plants? Another waste of your time. By pulling up annuals, you end up throwing away all the good soil that clings to their roots! Plus, it leaves your garden's soil open to erosion all winter! Just leave annuals in place in the fall. Even when dead, they at least hold the soil in place.

It's especially important to leave annual plants in place if you grew legumes (peas, beans, etc.)



in order to enrich the soil in nitrogen. They must be either left in place or buried; otherwise the soil will not benefit from the nitrogen produced on their roots.

In the spring, you can cut back anything that is left of the previous year's annuals (often they largely decompose over the winter) and simply work their residues into the soil to feed the coming year's plants.

### Freshly harvested carrots

Harvest your vegetables at the right season.



Harvest your vegetables. Start with the most cold-sensitive

ones, such as tomatoes, cucumbers and peppers, as soon as nighttime temperatures regularly drop below 50 °F (10 °C). Many other vegetables, like root vegetables (carrots, beets, etc.), tolerate a little frost, so there is less of a rush to bring them in. In fact, the taste of many vegetables, such as cabbage, Brussels sprouts, Jerusalem artichokes and leeks, actually improves after a few frosts.



### Shrub wrapped in plastic for the winter

*This kind of winter protection often harms the plant more than it protects it.*

Protect tender plants from the cold? I strongly suggest that, if you want to become a laidback gardener, you let plants that really aren't adapted to your climate die and replace them with plants better suited to your conditions. If you do that, you won't need to protect anything!

If you want to keep tender plants alive for a while (they usually die after a few years anyway, in spite of your efforts to save them), remember that the best winter protection is mulch: a good, thick layer (6 to 8 inches/15 to 20 cm) of chopped dead leaves at their base.

Protecting the roots of a tender shrub from the cold is much more important to its survival than protecting its aerial parts. After all, if the roots die, the whole plant dies! Wrapping with burlap or geotextile, which is classic winter care in many areas, does reduce wind damage somewhat, but often leads to more serious damage due to the alternating freezing and thawing that occurs in a closed environment.

If you still insist on wrapping your tender shrubs and conifers against the cold, at least don't start installing this winter protection until just before severe cold is expected: mid-November to mid-December in many climates. Wrapping up plants when the weather is still mild does more harm than good.

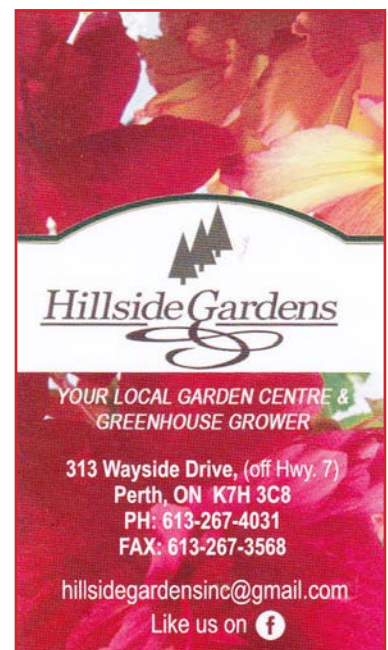
Clean the gutters. Otherwise, you could have a nasty surprise! This is best done when most of the leaves have fallen from the trees.

Clean your garden tools. Leaving them dirty and humid in the fall can lead to rust over the winter. To clean them quickly and efficiently, fill a bucket with sand and pour in a liter of vegetable oil. Plunge them into this mixture 2 or 3 times. This cleans them, sharpens them and coats them with oil, which will help prevent rust during the winter.

Have your lawn mower serviced. Why let your mower rust all winter? At the very end of the season, take it to a specialist for a tune-up/sharpening.

And there you go: a few odd jobs to take care of in the fall. Not so bad, really. And you still have several weeks to get them done!

**HAPPY FALL  
CLEAN-UP!**



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