



# The Ladyslipper

Perth & District Horticultural Society

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



Est. 1984

P.O. Box 494  
Perth, ON K7H 3G1  
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## President's Pen

Well, here we are at the beginning of fall but still in the twilight zone. Even the weather is strange this year. I don't recall getting frost as early as we did this year. It is sad to see some of my annuals wilted from the frost damage. I have a few dahlias that survived so hopefully I will have some colourful blooms for Thanksgiving.

We are going to do a virtual flower show in October with all of the photos that you are going to send me with your Fall or Thanksgiving designs. Check out the schedule further along in the newsletter.

Once again, thank you Jane for putting together another great newsletter. As well, I want to thank Lynda Haddon for her submissions and all the hard work she did this summer along with the volunteers to keep the Flag garden and Museum garden looking beautiful. If you have any local interest stories and/or pictures you would like to share with our members, please do not hesitate to send them to me so we can share them in the newsletter or Facebook.

I would like to thank all of our members who came out this summer to view the three gardens. Hopefully next year other members will come forward to display their gardens.

Stay safe and healthy as we journey through 2020.

Linda Bartlett

Email: [pdhsmembers@gmail.com](mailto:pdhsmembers@gmail.com)

## Perth Flag Garden

Submitted by Lynda Haddon



The Flag Garden was originally created in 1925 by Philip McParlan to honour WWI war veterans. Its present form came to being c1932 and is based on a structure Mr. McParlan saw at his training base in Quebec, just before he was shipped out. Kim McPherson's husband, Ed, is the grandson of the creator of the garden, Philip J. McParlan, and Philip is also the inspiration for its current shape. It has been very exciting to have so many pieces of its historical puzzle fall into place. The sign on the Gore St. Bridge will be amended to have Mr. McParlan's name included in the garden's description. The land belongs to Parks Canada. PDHS has been looking after and providing plants for it for at least the last 20 years.

As you can see from the above photo, the 2020 garden picture (we take a picture each year), really shows how well the garden did this year. We can be very proud of how the garden turned out. Couldn't do it without our devoted volunteers.

Hint: It is my understanding that there will be some special recognition when the garden turns 100 years old.

## Winter Storage of Dahlia Tubers



Dahlias from Lynda Haddon

Source: CBC Radio call in program "Ontario Today" from 2014 with gardening guru Ed Lawrence of Almonte ON. Edited by Jane Avery

Dig up dahlia tubers from your garden in October when the season is over. Let them dry out in the outdoors, then lay them down individually in a plastic bag. Cover the tuber with a layer of vermiculite or peat moss, then add the next tuber, ensuring that the tubers are at least 1 inch apart. Layer the tubers until the bag is almost full. Tie the bag closed. Store in a dark, cool place.

Bring the tubers out in February. Get a head start on next year's growing season by planting the tubers in pots, indoors.

## How to Over Winter Hibiscus

Source: Ed Lawrence, edited by Jane Avery



Find a sunny location in your home to winter your hibiscus. Give the plant a 1/4 turn daily so that all sides receive the same amount of light over the winter. The leaves will yellow and drop. Once this occurs prune the plant to 50% of its original size and reduce watering and stop feeding. It is better to keep the plant on the dry side. At the end of January or early in February recommence watering and lightly feed. When new growth reaches 3 to 4" pinch it back slightly. This will encourage your hibiscus to branch out.

Jane's note: Hibiscus can be prone to infestations of whitefly. They can be found on the underside of the leaves. Remedies are available including: Safer Soap: a short-lived natural pesticide and Botani Gard ES: a biological insecticide.



On CTV News the other day, Gardening Expert Carson Arthur of Hiller, ON talked about Whitefly on plants. His recommendation is that when bringing plants indoors in the fall, to spray them first with insecticide and seal the plant in a plastic bag, storing in a dark place for 3 days. This will allow the insecticide to do its job.

## Outdoor Gardening Tips

Gardening Expert Marjorie Harris recommends to never over tidy the garden. Don't cut down all the perennials, leave seeds for the birds and standing stems to catch the snow and make winter shadows.

Marjorie also advises to never throw out leaves unless they are seriously diseased. Use them in the composter, rake them up on top of boards where they will be broken down by worms.

## ***Celosia Argentea Cristata!***

**Pronounced:** see-low-zhuh

**Season:** late summer to early fall

**Attracts:** hummingbirds



Celosia flowers have a lovely texture and interesting shapes. They come in a variety of striking colours and pack a punch of drama. The flowers are beautiful fresh in a garden border, in pots or in a bouquet. Additionally, they can be dried easily if hung upside down.

Celosia is native to the highlands of East Africa and is part of the Amaranth family. It is used in traditional herbal medicine to treat many different ailments. And another fun fact- the leaves and stems are edible!

There are three different types of celosia flowers:

Plume: with striking upright spires

Cockscomb: with fascinating twisted forms that mimic brain structures

Wheat: looks like wheat grass

### **Growing Tips from Garden Gate Magazine:**

- ▶ Grow celosia in **full sun** - at least 6 to 8 hours a day
- ▶ Well-drained, nutrient rich soil keep plants growing strong.

- ▶ Use **liquid plant food** every couple of weeks, especially if it's been rainy or really hot: lots of rain may wash away nutrients and temps above 95 degrees F slow growth.
- ▶ You may need to **stake** taller varieties, especially cockscomb types with heavy blooms. Push a bamboo stake into the ground within a few inches of the stem at planting time and attach it with a piece of twine in a figure eight pattern as it grows.

Celosia flowers can last up to a month, but they still need deadheading to speed new ones along. Blooms start to fade from the bottom up, so when the bottom third to half is done, remove it at the leaf joint. This encourages side stems to take off more quickly, and plants won't waste energy producing seed.



**To dry:** position the flowers at different levels in the bunch so air circulates, and the blooms are not damaged.



## **Invasion From Mars?**

### **No, it is more likely this season's crop of Giant Puffballs: "Calvatia Gigantea"**

Source: Ediblewildfood.com

The giant puffball typically grows in width and height anywhere between 10 and 70 cm (about 4" to 27") and can weigh several kilograms. It has and continues to be a great source of food for many people worldwide. Historically, it was used by the Iroquois and Meskwaki for food. In addition to being a source of food for centuries, the giant puffball was valuable as a styptic dressing to stem the bleeding of wounds. The giant puffball can be found growing as a solitary entity, in small groups, and they have been known to form large circles. This type of edible mushroom grows rapidly and fruit late in the summer to early fall.



### **Distinguishing Features**

Calvatia gigantea are easy to spot, although from a distance they can be mistaken for a volleyball. Young puffballs have a white fleshy interior. The flesh is called gleba, and when immature (and edible), it is pure white, and has the texture of a marsh mellow. Puffballs are soft and round, with the odd crater or mar on the skin, and feel like suede to the touch; give them a tap and they sound like a drum.

### **Habitat**

The giant puffball is often found at the edge of fields, and in rank vegetation in nutrient rich waste ground and on woodland edges. They tend to grow in the same location annually. Giant puffballs grow in many locations throughout Canada, the U.S., Europe and Asia.

### **Edibility**

Always cook before eating or dehydrate. The taste is rather faint, yet there is a pleasant earthy scent. Eat only when the interior tissue is uniformly white. If infested with insects or maggots, it should be trimmed in order to avoid the infested parts. Never was the puffball with water as it will soak up water like a sponge and become very soggy. This and other edible puffballs can be stored up to 5 days in the refrigerator without losing significant quality.



For more information check out this latest article on Giant Puffballs from Ourwindor.ca:

<https://www.ourwindsor.ca/whatson-story/10205109-it-s-giant-puffball-mushroom-season-here-s-how-to-identify-and-prepare-them/>

**Note:** Jane Avery, your newsletter editor recently tasted a local giant puffball, fried in butter. It was lovely. I am told that puffballs act much like tofu. They take on the taste of ingredients added. Butter and garlic are recommended.

## Pumpkin Decorating

Here are some fun pumpkin decorating projects to do for the fall.

### Flower Power Pumpkin

Use a hot glue-gun to cover your pumpkin with dried flowers for an enchanting fall centerpiece.



### Dracula Pumpkin

This pumpkin painting idea is “spooktacular”! Spray-paint a pumpkin lime green. Craft cardstock features and glue in place. Black tape was used for the hair and eyes.



### Friendly Halloween Cats

Create a litter of kittens with painted pumpkins. First, coat each pumpkin with matte-finish sealant to dull the waxy surface. To get the painted pumpkin faces, paint the pumpkins different colors, applying two or three coats of paint (let the paint dry between coats). Draw a nose, mouth, and whiskers on each pumpkin with a black felt-tip marker. For the eyes, draw

eye-shape outlines and eyelashes using the marker. Paint the inside of the eyes white, let dry, then paint green irises outlined in black. Cut out ear shapes from crafts foam, and hot-glove them in place.



### Buffalo Check Pumpkin

Who doesn't love a fall flannel? Don't leave your pumpkin out of the fun. An overlapping pattern with different shades of black & grey, is a chic take on plaid for your seasonal pumpkin decorations. First paint your pumpkin white and let dry, then add the plaid.



For more inspiration check out Better Homes and Gardens pumpkin decorating ideas.

[https://www.bhg.com/halloween/pumpkin-decorating/painted-pumpkin-ideas/?utm\\_source=emailshare&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=email-share-gallery&utm\\_content=20200919](https://www.bhg.com/halloween/pumpkin-decorating/painted-pumpkin-ideas/?utm_source=emailshare&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=email-share-gallery&utm_content=20200919)

# How to Plant Spring Bulbs

Taken from Lee Valley Newsletter and edited by Linda Bartlett



In temperate regions with four seasons, autumn is the best time to prepare gardens for next spring's show of colour, by adding bulbs to flowerbeds. There are a variety of bulbs to plant: daffodils, narcissus, crocus, hyacinths, alliums, some lilies, and of course, tulips.

Spring-flowering bulbs are planted in autumn because they're hardy in colder temperate climates, and they require a cool dormant period of at least 8 – 12 weeks before they can produce flower buds. The planted bulbs develop roots until the ground freezes.

Bulbs can be planted until the ground is frozen or no longer workable. Daffodils and narcissus should be planted earlier (early September to late October). Other bulbs, especially tulips, can be planted from early September through to mid-December, as long as the ground is not frozen solid.

When purchasing bulbs, look for firm ones – these will produce the best blooms. Discard any that show signs of rot, are soft, or crumble when squeezed.

## Soil Conditions

The majority of bulbs prefer well-drained soil that's neutral to mildly acidic (pH 6.5). Heavy clay soils aren't suitable unless they've been amended with organic matter.

Water the ground before planting, but do not over-water – bulbs are highly susceptible to fungus and mildew diseases, which spread in excessively wet conditions. Bulbs planted in poorly drained soil are likely to rot or develop botrytis blight (gray mold), which is a felt-like mold that covers the scales of

bulbs and causes stunting, dieback and distorted growth. Tulips are especially susceptible.

## Digging Tools

Holes can be dug with a trowel or spade, but there are a variety of specialized tools available, such as a garden auger that attaches to a hand drill. My favourite tool is a bulb planter which is a cylindrical shaped tool that removes a core of soil at the correct planting depth. After positioning a bulb in the hole, you can use the planter to replace the soil and cover the bulb.

## Fertilizing

Bone meal or slow-release bulb fertilizer should be placed in the hole before planting. Lightly mix the fertilizer with the soil. Be sure to follow the package directions, which vary depending on the planting area.

For established bulbs that are left in the ground each season, you should top dress the soil with bone meal and mix thoroughly using a cultivator every couple of years.

## Planting

As a general guide, plant larger bulbs like tulips, daffodils and hyacinths 6" deep and 6" apart. Smaller bulbs like crocuses (which are actually corms – short, solid underground stems covered in papery leaves) and grape hyacinths should be planted 3" deep and 3" apart. Planting at the maximum recommended depth helps to protect bulbs from moisture loss during intense heat and also helps deter predators (squirrels and chipmunks love tulip bulbs and deer love the tulip flowers). **Tip:** when planting tulips, plant some daffodil bulbs (animals do not like them) around the perimeter of the tulip bulbs. This is the best protection for tulips that I have found.

Planting the bulbs in the right direction is key. For pointed bulbs such as tulips, alliums, lilies, daffodils and hyacinths, ensure the pointed part faces up toward the sky, and the flat part faces down into the ground. If you can't tell which end is which, plant it sideways — this makes it easier for the plant's shoots and roots to grow in the correct direction.

## Care

Generally, bulbs are left in the ground for the next season. Even when the plant is in decline, its leaves continue to process food; therefore, it's important

## PDHS Summer Garden Tour Highlights

By Jane Avery and Ute Schall - Photos by Ute Schall

On July 10, 2020 Ute Schall and Jane Avery were delighted to tour the gardens of P&DHS members Catherine Stephen Dunn, Sandi Scissions and Linda



Bartlett. What a fabulous summer day it was, with the temperature topping 90 degrees F. Our hosts



each provided a warm welcome, amazing insights on their choice of plant materials and the back stories on the creation of their garden oasis. Thanks Catherine, Sandi and Linda for your extraordinary efforts to keep

calm and garden on despite Covid and the heat wave.



not to disturb the leaves until they have died back naturally and the bulb goes into dormancy (usually six weeks after blooming has stopped). Until then, you should cut only the spent blooms.

**It's good practice to dig up spring bulbs every three years.** The bulbs can be dug up (with their foliage intact) and stored in a garden shed, garage or secluded area of your garden until their foliage dies back naturally. They can then be cleaned and stored somewhere cool and dry to replant again in the fall. **Tip:** plant annuals around the bulbs once they flower to hide the leaves as they die back in the garden.

### Seeds to Sow in Fall

Submitted by Lynda Haddon

Gardeners can't wait for Spring and our hearts go pitty-pat looking at all of the cheerful seed packets that show up in garden centres, hardware and dollar stores. It is a right of passage as we get excited about what we would like to either jump start in our homes or greenhouses or sow directly into the ground when it warms up in the Spring.

There are however some plants whose seeds need the frigid chill called "Canadian Winter" to provide a period of hibernation and this extended cold encourages each seed to get serious and grow when temperatures permit in the Spring.

Here is a partial list of plants whose seeds need to sit dormant in the cold from Fall to Spring to succeed. I don't plant the seeds but sprinkle them on the ground making sure they make contact with bare soil. A little watering doesn't hurt.

If you cannot get these seeds on the ground before the cold sets in, they can be stored in the freezer to get the cold they require. Keep them labelled so that no one thinks they might be pizza topping condiments. lol

Now is the perfect time to get them on the ground if any of these are favourites.

Hollyhocks	Euphoria
Morning Glories	Lupins
False Indigo	Verbena bonariensis
Poppies	Phlox seeds
Coneflower	

## October Virtual Flower Show

Since we can't have our meetings and regular flower shows, we decided to hold a virtual flower show. The show will not be judged but presented as a fun and entertaining slideshow for our members to enjoy via email, Facebook and our website. All you have to do is create your design as per the classes listed below and take a photograph and email them as per the instructions below.

Here are the classes:

**Class 1: *Last Days of Summer.*** Pick and Plunk: pick flowers from your garden or pots/baskets and plunk them in a vase for display.

**Class 2: *Fresh Eats.*** A display of your best vegetable(s) from your garden.

**Class 3: *Thanksgiving.*** A Thanksgiving centerpiece for your table.

**Class 4: *Welcome.*** A wreath made of fresh and/or dried plant material

**Instructions:** Please email your photos in JPEG format, one per class, as an attachment, to [pdhsmembers@gmail.com](mailto:pdhsmembers@gmail.com), by **Tuesday, October 13**. Please rename your image file to include the class number and your name in the file name (image000\_class1\_lindab.jpeg). By submitting your photos, you agree to have them shared with other members via email and on the Society's Facebook page and website. Unless you request otherwise, you will be identified by your first name and last-name initial (e.g., Linda B). If you have any questions or need help renaming files, contact [pdhsmembers@gmail.com](mailto:pdhsmembers@gmail.com).

Looking forward to all of your amazing creations. We hope you will participate!

## The Garden Shed Restored

Submitted by Lynda Haddon

I wanted to share our little garden shed with you which began its restoration last October and only last Wednesday was the project completed. This was most likely the original home on our property, c1820. Bits and bobs were found under the building to help confirm our suspicions (pottery shards, spoon, canning jar, lots of metal). There were also many brilliant stones under the structure, and several large, rectangular stones not used in the building of the amazing stone home about 20 yards in front of this building. Two of those stones are now the steps going into the building and two more frame the ends of the front garden. One also steps up to my clothesline now. The three metal "tires" were found at the back of our property in the house dump. I had painted the door a red but it wasn't 'right' and all paint mixes were held up in delivery to Cdn. Tire (due to covid) and the mix just came in, so last Wednesday I got the door painted again with the right red. The pile of rocks on the bottom right is a stone castle our 3-year old grandson built. Can't bring myself to move it. This precious building is going to live on for another 200 years, and it is all so worth it! We cannot ignore our amazing heritage.





## Fall Gardening Checklist

Source: Landscape Ontario

With the cooler fall weather upon us, it's time to get outside and prepare your garden for the onset of a Canadian winter. Maybe you haven't spent that much time in the garden over the past few weeks, with kids going back to school, or you have managed to get away and spend some time off at the cottage, but there are a lot of little tasks that need to be completed to get your garden ready for winter.

Fall is a great time to plant trees and shrubs, cut back perennials, remove annuals and get your lawn healthy for next spring. Remember to keep watering. Trees and shrubs that are deprived of water now will be easily stressed in the winter. Below is a handy guide to fall clean up tasks.



*Falling leaves signal the beginning of the fall garden clean up season.*

### September:

- ▶ Collect seed and herbs for drying.
- ▶ Add compost or manure to garden beds.
- ▶ Cover water features with netting to collect falling leaves.
- ▶ Check houseplants for pests, then start to move indoors.
- ▶ Plant new trees and shrubs, to give them at least six weeks before frost and continue to water.
- ▶ Plant spring flowering bulbs.
- ▶ Clean bird feeders, gardening tools.
- ▶ Bring in any clay pots.
- ▶ Pull weeds before they go to seed to reduce the number of weeds next year.
- ▶ Fertilize your lawn.

### October:

- ▶ Transplant shrubs or young trees to new locations.
- ▶ Cut diseased areas out of perennials. Do not compost.
- ▶ Rake and compost any fallen leaves.
- ▶ Clean up garden debris. Remove all vegetable plants and fallen fruit.
- ▶ Remove dead annuals from the garden, after a frost.
- ▶ Cut back perennials to discourage overwintering pests. Leave flowers with seeds for the birds.
- ▶ Continue watering trees and shrubs until the ground freezes.
- ▶ Sharpen lawn mower blade and pruners.
- ▶ Trim tall grass away from trees and corners of your home to discourage small rodents from creating nests.
- ▶ Dig up tender bulbs such as dahlia, canna and gladiola. Wrap them in moist material and store in a cool, dark space.

## November:

- ▶ Fertilize your lawn
- ▶ Divide spring and summer blooming perennial plants.
- ▶ Turn off outside water connections. Drain garden hoses.
- ▶ Buy bulbs to force for winter.
- ▶ Continue watering trees and shrubs until the ground freezes.
- ▶ Wrap screening around fruit tree trunks to protect from small animals.
- ▶ Mulch rose bushes.
- ▶ Clean fallen leaves in downspouts and gutters.

## December:

- ▶ Start paperwhites and amaryllis for winter blooms.

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR - Special Online Event with Paul Zammit - Hosted by Ottawa Horticultural Society - Tuesday, October 27 at 7:30 PM



TUESDAY, OCTOBER 27, 2020 AT 7:30 PM - 9 PM

### The Soul of the Garden - Webinar with Paul Zammit

Online Event

the CBC Here and Now radio program. In 2017, Garden Making magazine selected Paul and his wife as two of Canada's top 20 people shaping gardens across Canada. Paul was also the recipient of the 2019 Garden Communicator of the Year award from Landscape Ontario.

Presentation will be a live Webinar at: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCMkJSn2gaoejcGCdzK6xRWg>

**How to view the presentation:** To join the presentation, please click on the YouTube link (above) to go to the OHS YouTube Channel. To simply watch the presentation there is nothing else you need to do. The presentation will also be recorded and available at this link afterwards. The easiest way to find the channel is using the link; if you are on YouTube and do a search please use Ottawa Horticultural Society (we aren't the only ones that use OHS as an acronym!). If you subscribe to the OHS YouTube channel, it will be easy to find in the future.

**Starting the video:** Once you are on the site, you must click on the rectangle of the video to start watching. Until 7:30 you will see a screen that says the presentation will begin at 7:30 p.m., so please be patient.

**If you think you may want to ask a question:** There will be a Q & A session at the end of the presentation when your questions submitted will be put to Paul by the moderator. Using the live chat panel beside the video, you can type your question. If this is the first time you've done so, YouTube will take you through some steps required to make your own "channel". You will then have to return to the video and hit play again. It's probably best to do this before the presentation starts so you don't miss anything.

**Instructions for creating a YouTube channel:** <https://support.google.com/youtube/answer/1646861?hl=en>

If you don't wish to register, you can still watch the video and can email a question during the presentation to [info@ottawahort.org](mailto:info@ottawahort.org)