



The Ladyslipper

Perth & District Horticultural Society

www.perthhortsociety.com



Est. 1984

October 2025

President's Pen

Hello October!

Cool, crisp mornings and sunny afternoons, what a perfect combination. Take a moment to step outside, breathe in the fresh air, and soak in the stunning fall colours. This is my favourite time of year to be outside, tidying up the gardens, refreshing flower beds, and getting those spring bulbs tucked into the ground for a beautiful bloom next year.

November Annual Meeting

This year, our Annual Meeting will be held on Tuesday, November 18, a week later than our usual 2nd Tuesday of the month. We will have our Potluck Dinner at 6:00 PM, followed by the Annual Meeting, Board elections, and a festive Christmas Floral Demo by Cindy Zorgel. We will have a live auction of Cindy's designs after the demo, followed by the door prizes. We invite any member who feels creative to bring a floral arrangement, a potted plant in a decorative container, or another festive table centerpiece, with the intention that these designs will serve as door prizes. More details will be shared later this month, but for now—save the date!

Join the PDHS Board and Help Us Grow!

With our November meeting just around the corner, we're excited to invite members to consider joining the Perth & District Horticultural Society Board.

What does the Board do?

We meet a week or two before our general meetings (eight times per year) to plan

upcoming events, review finances, and brainstorm new ideas. Between meetings, we stay in touch via email to ensure things move smoothly.

Board members help bring our society to life by organizing events like Seedy Sunday, Earth Day, plant sales, and garden tours. We also handle behind-the-scenes essentials—such as coordinating speakers, managing social media, overseeing memberships and finances, and staying connected with District Two and the Ontario Horticultural Association.

No special experience is required, just a love of gardening and a willingness to help nurture our community. Our goal is to inspire gardeners of all levels and share our passion for horticulture through events and education.

We're thrilled that all nine of our current Board members will be continuing next year. To keep things fresh and manageable, we're hoping to welcome one or two new members to share ideas and lend a hand.

If you're interested in joining this wonderful team, please reach out to Muriel Hopper or Caroline Bolduc, who are leading our Nominating Committee.

We're always eager to hear your suggestions for speakers, outings, workshops, and newsletter topics. Your ideas and support help our society continue to thrive.

Let's make this fall season a time of growth, connection, and community.

Linda

What Pruning Tools Should I Have?

by Dale Odorizzi, Lanark County Master Gardeners



There are many tools for pruning available on the market. Hand pruners can range in price from \$60+, down to \$10. The most important thing to look for is how do these tools feel in my hand. If you have a lot of pruning to do, you may want to buy the heavy-duty tools that professionals use. Cheap tools are really no bargain as you will end up replacing them after little use. Power tools are making many improvements and now, many are powered by a rechargeable battery, so you don't have to worry about a long extension cord or having sufficient gasoline to power them.

There is also good news for left-handed folks. Increasingly, tools are being built for them. You may have to look but they are available.

You do not need to have a tool shed full of pruning equipment to handle your pruning needs. A few basic tools should do the job.

Clippers and Loppers

Hand Clippers are the main tool for home gardeners. I never went into my yard without my hand clippers in my pocket. Clippers come in 2 styles:

- ▶ Scissor type where the two blades cross.
- ▶ Anvil type where the two blades meet.

The choice is yours. It is a matter of personal preference.

Loppers are like clippers but with long handles so you can reach farther up into your tree or shrub without needing to get out the ladder.

Saws

For heavier work, you will need a pruning saw. Look for a saw with fine teeth for smooth work and coarser teeth for large limbs. You will likely need one of each to get the job done. There are:

- ▶ Pole saws that give you extra reach while standing securely on the ground.
- ▶ Curved blade saw which is ideal for gardeners with light to average amounts of pruning. I like to look for one that has replacement blades as sharpening the teeth is time consuming. The narrow blade makes it easy to get into the plant if necessary.
- ▶ Chain saws are useful for removing trees or large branches. They make a rough cut and are difficult to control. Safety equipment is essential when using these beasts. I leave that to the pros. Smaller battery operated saws are a great choice for homeowners.



Shearing Equipment

Shearing is a form of pruning that involves removing soft new growth. It is done primarily to dwarf trees, shape hedges or to develop formal topiary. When shearing, you are not cutting any heavy wood so you will need different equipment.

- ▶ Machetes and knives are light weight and fast and easy to use. They are inexpensive and easy to use but they are dangerous so choose and use wisely.
- ▶ Electric saw, if you have a large hedge to care for, electric shears are worth the investment. They now come in battery powered forms and can be small and lightweight.
- ▶ Hedge Shears are safe, durable, easy to control and inexpensive. They are adequate for most shearing jobs, are easily sharpened and require little muscle power.

I reached out to my brother, Kim Allen for his input as he has a house on a large, treed lot and a cottage surrounded by many trees. He does have a traditional chainsaw but also a battery-operated pruner that easily cuts larger branches. He also uses a saw that attaches to the end of his string trimmer giving him about an 11 foot reach.

Keep your pruning tools well-oiled and rust free. As you can see from these tools, I do not always practice what I preach.



Plant Now for a Spectacular Spring Garden

by Linda Bartlett

As the gardening season winds down, it's the perfect time to start planning for spring colour. From now until the ground freezes, you can plant spring-flowering bulbs like tulips, daffodils, crocuses, hyacinths, muscari, and alliums. A little planning now will reward you with waves of blooms from mid-April through mid-June.

Layering for Continuous Colour

One of the easiest ways to create a long-lasting spring display is to plant bulbs in layers. Start by placing larger bulbs—such as tulips, daffodils, and alliums—deeper in the soil, then add smaller bulbs like hyacinths, muscari, and crocuses closer to the surface. By choosing bulbs with staggered bloom times, you'll enjoy a garden that comes alive in stages:

- ▶ Crocuses bloom first, followed by early daffodils, hyacinths, and muscari.
- ▶ Tulips take the spotlight in mid to late spring.
- ▶ Alliums provide height and drama at the end of the season.



Daffodils bloom from early to mid-spring, while tulips brighten the garden a bit later. Both come in a range of heights, colours, and shapes—so mix and match for variety.

Natural Pest Protection

A clever planting strategy can also help deter pests. Daffodil bulbs contain a substance that deer, squirrels and other animals avoid, making them excellent companions for tulips. Alliums, with their strong scent, also help keep unwanted visitors away. Tuck daffodil and allium bulbs among tulips to give your spring display a built-in defense.

Design Inspiration

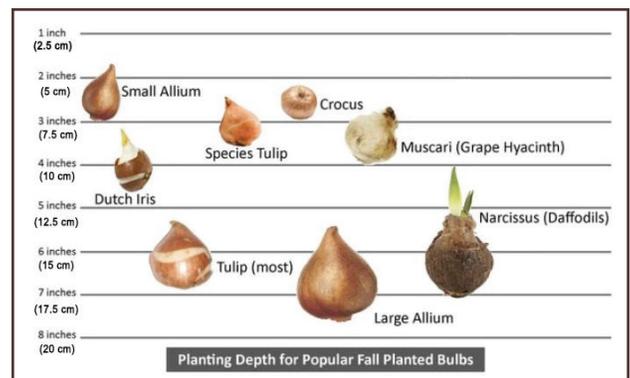
- ▶ **Purple and Yellow:** Pair golden daffodils with deep purple tulips for a striking contrast.
- ▶ **Mid-Season Mixes:** Combine mid-spring bloomers like Darwin tulips and large-cupped daffodils for a complete, balanced look.
- ▶ **Monochromatic Calm:** Choose similar shades, such as white daffodils and cream tulips, for a soft, elegant effect.
- ▶ **Textural Play:** Mix ruffled, double daffodils with classic cup-shaped tulips for extra interest.

How to Plant in Layers

- ▶ Use well-draining soil to prevent bulbs from rotting over winter.
- ▶ Plant bulbs in clusters or drifts rather than straight lines for a more natural look.
- ▶ Start with the bulbs that bloom last at the bottom of the hole and work your way up with earlier bloomers on top.
- ▶ Add some bone meal/blood meal mixture over the bulbs and fill in the holes.
- ▶ Water thoroughly after planting to settle the soil.
- ▶ When using containers, plant a little deeper than in the ground for added winter protection.

Suggested Planting Depths

- ▶ Allium: 5–8 in (12.5–20 cm)
- ▶ Crocus: 2–3 in (5–8 cm)
- ▶ Daffodil: 6–8 in (15–20 cm)
- ▶ Dutch Iris: 4 in (10 cm)
- ▶ Hyacinth: 4–6 in (10–15 cm)
- ▶ Muscari: 3–4 in (7.5–10 cm)
- ▶ Tulip: 6 in (15 cm)



Soil and Placement Tips

- ▶ Use well-draining soil for both garden beds and containers to prevent bulbs from rotting over winter.
- ▶ Water thoroughly after planting to settle the soil.
- ▶ Position containers in sheltered spots with good drainage.

A Few Final Tips

- ▶ **Foliage Care:** Allow tulip and daffodil foliage to die back naturally after blooming so the bulbs can store energy for next year.
- ▶ **Pest Prevention:** In early spring, spray emerging buds with a product like Critter Ridder to discourage animals and birds. Placing dishes of water around your garden can also keep them from nibbling on buds.
- ▶ **Cut Flower Care:** Daffodils release a sap that's toxic to other cut flowers, including tulips. If you'd like to combine them in a vase, let the daffodils sit in water separately for a few hours, rinse the stems, and then arrange them together.

