Loving care to tender bulbs will preserve them



for them
after they've
finished
their show,
they can be
replanted in
the spring
for another
season of enjoyment. Tender bulbs won't live in cold

Canna, caladium, dahlias, begonias, elephant cars, oxalis, pineapple lilies and other exotic foliage plants and flowers fit into this category. The foliage on some of them is unbelievable! Huge leaves on elephant ears or tiger stripes on a tall canna are sure to elicit favorable com-

sure to elicit favorable com-ments.
You can either choose to treat them as annuals and discard them, remembering that some of them are expensive, or hold them over for another season. Here's what to do when frost blackens the foliage: Carefully dig up the bulbs so they won't be damaged. Cut off

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excess foliage and brush off loose soil. Set the bulbs out in a warm, dry place with good air circulation to dry for a day or two. When dry, brush off remaining soil, being careful not to bruise the bulbs when handling, as this promotes mold.

After the bulbs are dry, cut off any remaining foliage and pack the bulbs in a few layers of an appropriate "medium" such as perilic, vermiculite, cocca hallow, except any except and the properties of the properties of the properties of the properties of the separated by your medium of choice in a dry place until spring.

medium of choice in a dry place until spring.

Optimal storage temperatures vary for different bulbs, but typically range just under or over 50 degrees. Don't worry yourself needlessly—few people have temperature-controlled storage areas; store your bulbs the best you can. Don't let them freeze.

A few cautions: Tuberous begonian need to be taken care of before frost. Dahlia stems may have water in them. Hang them upside down to drain. When digging gladioli, you'll notice that the shriveled old corm is there, as well as new corms. Separate as well as new corms. Separate them and discard the old, store

Remember, not all summerblooming bulbs are tender. Lilies,
for example, are winter hardy a
are alliums. Hardy summer
bulbs, like most of their springblooming cousins, are perennial
performers and can over winter
in the garden.

Thanks to the Netherlands
Flower Bulb Information Center
for its input.

Call for colchicums

The colchicums in my garden have finished blooming, and although the flowers didn't last very long, I would really miss

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Call for colchicums: Colchicums are sometimes called naked ladies.

them if they weren't there.

Several people have asked what they were so I thought you might like to learn about them,

might like to learn about them, too.

Colchicums are in the lily family, not the crocus family (iris), although they do resemble a crocus far more than they do a lily. They grow from corms rather than bulbs.

If you order plants by mail, place your order in the spring. Otherwise buy them in August or September and plant them as soon as you have them; they have a tendency to bloom soon after they're out of commercial storage.

Plant the corms in well-drained, fortile soil with the top of the corm 3 inches below the

surface. The foliage is quite wide, so give them room by spacing them 8 to 12 inches apart. It may take a year or so for them to bloom, but be patient.
They like morning sunlight; afternoon shade is believed to be

anternoon stude is believed to be beneficial by prolonging the blooming period. A site under an overhanding

A site under an overhanging tree or shrub branches will pro-tect them from heavy rain, hail

teet them from nearly thin, more early snows.

I planted my plants in the wrong location according to this research, so will transplant them to a more suitable place next year. No wonder they wilted in the hot afternoon sun!

I learn so much from doing this column.

this column.
There are many cultivars from

which to choose, so take your time when you make your selec-tion. Mark the place where you plant your colchicums so you won't disturb their garden place. Contion: They are noisonous. Caution: They are poisonous.

Travel plans

Travel plans
Good newel Space is still available on my river cruise to Holland, Belgium and the Florida.
The early booking deadline has been extended to Dec. 31, 20011
For information and/or a brochure, call Jean at The World of Travel, (248)203-0022. Don't miss this special opportunity.
Marty Figley is an advanced master gardener based in Birmingham. You can leave her a message by dialing (734) 953-2047 on a louch-tone phone.

CALENDAR

■ English Gardens will conduct free Holiday How To decorating demonstrations Saturday-Sunday, Nov. 17-18, at all five stores, including those at 6370 Orchard Lake Road in West Bloomfield (phone (248) 861-7608) and 4901 Coolidge Highway in Royal Oak (phone (248)

280-9500). The demonstrations will include How to Make a Bow, noon, 1 p.m., 2 p.m. and 3 p.m.; 1:15 p.m., 2:15 p.m. and 3:215 p.m., 2:15 p.m. and 3:35 Grown, 1:15 p.m., 2:15 p.m. and 3:35 p.m., 1:30 p.m. and Mark's New in Holiday Lighting, 12:45 p.m., and Mark's New in Holiday Lighting, 12:45 p.m., and Bloomfield Hills. Guest fee \$3.

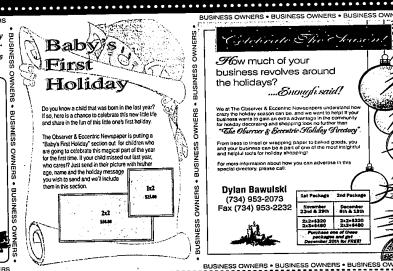
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