

# Plan before you plant bulbs for spring

This is the only time we can plant spring-flowering bulbs, so plan carefully where you want their beauty in the garden.

Bulbs need a few months of in-ground refrigeration to "do their magic." That's why we plant them this time of year. Some bulbs sprout very early in the spring, even in late winter, while others delay their appearance until almost summer. Many others bloom during the weeks in between.

If you know the sequence of bloom time, you can design the garden to have a display from bulbs for many weeks. In early spring look for snowdrops, winter aconite, crocus and glory-of-the-snow. Soon the bright daffodils appear, as do hyacinths with their sweet perfume.

Tulips are in their glory in mid-spring, especially the Triumph tulips and the tall Darwin hybrids. Later in the season the lily-flowered tulips and the Parrot tulips add their beauty.

Then last, but certainly not least, the gorgeous Dutch irises and the globe-shaped flowers or ornamental onions (alliums) add their beauty.

## WHERE

Bulbs can be planted in almost any flower bed, in borders and along walkways, even under trees that aren't yet in leaf at that time of year. There is a window of time when the sun hits the areas under the leafless trees, letting the sunshine in to help the bulbs achieve their performance.

You might want to create naturalistic clusters of bulbs in lawns and around tree bases, and daffodils and crocuses

work very well for this purpose. To achieve a natural look, simply gently toss the bulbs in the bedding area and plant them where they land.

Be aware of the color of the plants so that you can create a harmonizing picture. You may want to list the bulbs and their color and bloom time before you visit the nursery or place your order. The ultimate height of the plants will also come into consideration.

This will assure that you will have a pretty spring garden that is pleasing to look at and of which you can be proud.

## PUSCHKINIA

One of my favorite spring-flowering bulbs is puschkinia, which blooms from late March into April.

Puschkinia is also known as striped squill. Its blooms are fragrant and the inch flowers all have a blue stripe that is visible when you really look closely.

At a distance, the flowers have a faded look. Their beauty will last for several weeks on the 4- to 6-inch tall stems.

Mine grow near the edge of the deck where we can really get a good look each time we're out there.

You might want to try something completely different this year and naturalize puschkinia in the lawn, as they are long-lived and spread readily if they like where they are growing.

A bonus is that chipmunks, voles and their kin won't eat them, unless they are very hungry.

If you want the bulbs to be extra safe from the animals, a simple solution is to mix a handful of sharp crushed gravel around the bulbs as you put them into the ground.

## PROGRAMS

Two exciting programs about bulbs that you won't want to miss will take place Sunday and Monday, Sept. 22 and 23, at Telly's Greenhouse, 3301



Bulbs for spring gardens can soon be planted.

John R in Troy. Brent Heath of Brent and Becky's Bulbs in Gloucester, Va., will be the speaker.

At 1 p.m. Sept. 22, Brent will present Living Flower Arrangements: Bulbs for Containers, a slide lecture that illustrates the many kinds of bulbs that are suitable for growing in containers. The fee for this lecture is \$5 (refunded with \$5 off any purchase the day of the class).

At 2:30 p.m. Sept. 22, Brent will conduct a hands-on workshop at which participants will have the opportunity to create their own combination planting, which they may take home.

The fee for this workshop is \$20.

Brent will present Pest-resistant Bulbs 10-11 a.m. Sept. 23.

The audience will learn about the kinds of flower bulbs

that naturally resist the attacks of such critters as deer, rabbits, squirrels, voles and insects.

Brent will also share how to make edible bulbs like lilies, tulips and crocus more pest resistant with an assortment of remedies.

A limited number of the Heaths' latest books, *Daffodils for North American Gardens* and *Tulips for North American Gardens* will be available for purchase.

The classes include free handouts, beverages and snacks. Please call to pre-register, as space is limited. (Note the \$20 fee for the Sept. 22 workshop.) Call (248) 689-8735.

Marty Figley is an advanced master gardener based in Birmingham. You can leave her a message by dialing (734) 953-2047 on a touch-tone phone. Her fax number is (248) 644-1314.

# Winners in sunflower contest to be announced next week

The winners of this year's High Hopes sunflower contest will be announced in At Home Thursday, Sept. 19.

Prizes for the tallest sunflower and the sunflower with the largest seed head will be awarded 1 p.m.

Saturday, Sept. 21, at English Gardens, 6370 Orchard Lake Road in West Bloomfield.

The contest was sponsored by the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers and English Gardens.

# Guide helps identify trees

What Tree Is That?, a pocket guide for identifying trees, is available from The National Arbor Day Foundation.

The 72-page guide will help you identify 136 different trees found in the eastern and central United States.

Well-known trees are included - oaks, maples, spruces and pines. Also, species such as honeysuckle and mockernut hickory, sassafras and shad-bush, persimmon and pawpaw and pagodatre and pecan.

Dozens of drawings illustrate the trees' leaves or needles and their acorns, berries, seed pods, cones and other identifying features. What Tree Is That? is

organized to make it easy to identify trees in a simple, step-by-step fashion.

To obtain your tree-ID guide, send your name and address and \$3 to What Tree Is That?, The National Arbor Day Foundation, Nebraska City, NE 68410.

"Helping people enjoy and appreciate trees is central to the educational mission of the Arbor Day Foundation," said John Rosenow, the foundation's president.

"Being able to identify trees is important in knowing how to care for them and how to plant the right tree in the right place."

## GARDEN CALENDAR

**Rose myths**  
Congress has declared 2002 the Year of the Rose. Roger and Nancy Lindley, owners of Great Lakes Roses, are celebrating with a series of free programs that will enable Michigan gardeners to succeed with roses.

Each presentation lasts about an hour. Reservations aren't needed. Great Lakes Roses is at 49875 Willow Road, between Rawsonville and Sumpter (Belleville) roads in Sumpter Township, just south of Belleville. Call (734) 461-1230 or visit [www.GreatLakesRoses.com](http://www.GreatLakesRoses.com).

**Misconceptions and Mistakes** is the name of the program 1 p.m. Sunday, Sept. 15, or 11 a.m. Monday, Sept. 16. Nancy Lindley will debunk the common myths surrounding roses and their care.

**Indoor gardening**  
Saguro Nursery and Gardens, 470 W. Five Mile in Whitmore Lake, offers a series of free lectures by various garden experts 1-2 p.m. Sundays at the nursery.

Reservations aren't necessary. Come prepared to walk.

For more information, call (734) 469-4237.

**Saguro Nursery and Gardens** owner Richard Tuttle will speak on Gardening Indoors: Easy House Plants for Home and Office Sept. 15.

**School of Gardening**  
The Michigan School of Gardening offers a variety of classes. Advance registration is requested.

Many classes are limited in size and some have pre-requisites. Call (248) 4-GARDEN for information.

The schedule includes The Art of Fall Garden Cleanup, Monday, Sept. 16, at Goldner Walsh Nursery, 559 Orchard Lake Road in Pontiac; (539-501). The three-session Ins and Outs of Plants, Wednesday, Sept. 18 to Oct. 2, at Goldner Walsh Nursery (\$92.50); and the three-session All About Lawns, Thursday, Sept. 19 to Oct. 3, at Goldner Walsh Nursery (\$92.50).

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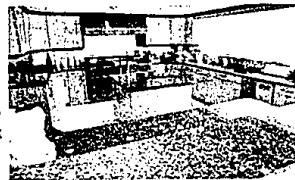
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