



Pumpkin Brook Organic Gardening, Inc.

Priscilla Hutt Williams

35 Turner Road, Townsend, Massachusetts 01469

(TEL) 978-597-3005 (FAX) 772-264-7886

phw@seedlingspecialist.com

Volume 2, June 2012

In This Issue

[Tick & Mosquito Spray](#)

[Summer Pruning](#)

[Low Maintenance](#)

[Perennials](#)

[June Is the Time for...](#)

Greetings,

It can be a challenge to deal with hot, humid weather in a New England garden. A good layer of mulch is your friend, as it will retain moisture and smother weeds. Follow the shade around your garden as you work or stroll, wear sun screen, drink from your water bottle, water your plants judiciously, and everything should be all right. And don't forget a tick check!

Please let us know if we can help monitor your garden during your upcoming vacation periods for water needs. This is especially important for recent [spring plantings](#).

We use a variety of handy watering devices that we bring out at this time of year:

- watering wand
- watering can
- tripod water stand
- Gator Jr.
- spike waterer
- rain gauge

Please let us know if one or more of these might help you with your watering program, and we will get the device over to you.

Types of Watering Devices



Tree Gator

Summer Pruning Time Is Here!

We are swinging into summer pruning this week and next. Our target is all the spring flowering shrubs and trees that have finished their bloom cycle and are beginning to push out rampant new growth. We plan to finish this work by Labor Day and will be checking in with each client for pruning needs. Remember that we employ a naturalistic style and endeavor to bring out each plant's best characteristics in our work. We reserve shearing for certain hedges only.

Carmine and Priscilla are ISA certified arborists and will be leading pruning work, along with our skilled supervisory staff.

Already I've had a question about deadheading rhododendrons. To do or not to do? Some varieties don't "die well" and leave big blobs of brown spent flowers all over the new leaves. I always recommend deadheading these types. In general, it's a good idea to deadhead all rhododendrons so that energy will go into leaves, stems and roots rather than seed production. In the heat the old flowers will quickly loose their stickiness and snap off easily. We save this work for after pruning is finished, finding it an ideal occupation on 90 degree plus days!



Tripod Water Stand



Watering Wand

If you need a copy of our Summer Watering Tips, please call or e-mail the office.

Thank you for your Referrals

We've met some of the best people and work in the nicest gardens through you, our loyal clients!

Thank you so much for referring us to your friends, family and neighbors in our service area: along Rt. 2 between Arlington and Harvard (with a dip into some surrounding towns).

We look forward to further great connections.



Salvia nemerosa 'Caradonna'

Speaking of rhododendrons, be on the lookout for notched leaves on new growth. This is a sign of nighttime feeding by the Black Vine Weevil that crawls up leaves and stems from the soil. Please let us know immediately if you see this, and we will come on an overcast or rainy day to drench the area around your plants with beneficial nematodes that attack this soil dwelling pest. Also we'll plan some fall soil amending to build more biological life in the soil, crowding out black vine weevils over time.



Black Vine Weevil Damage

Low Maintenance Plants You'll Love

Throughout the years, many of our busy clients have requested "low maintenance" landscapes, so we thought we might give you a few plant suggestions. Low maintenance landscapes can still produce a beautiful show of flowers and foliage, just without the time commitment of excessive pinching, pruning, spraying, watering and weeding. How about flowering perennial plants? These can be low maintenance too.

Here are four of our favorite low maintenance perennials:

Russian Sage 'Little Spires'

Russian sage stands up well to hot, dry, sunny areas and prefers no supplemental irrigation. It thrives in poor soils and requires very little maintenance other than cutting back old stems in the early spring. As an added bonus deer will avoid it due to its aromatic scent. This particular cultivar is an improved, dwarf selection, and it won't flop over or require staking like other cultivars. Flowering from summer into the fall, the lavender blue flowers and silvery, feathery foliage add lightness and height to the garden. It works well as a mass planting, in a border or as an accent.



Russian Sage 'Little Spires'

Salvia nemerosa 'Caradonna'

This newer cultivar has many advantages over the often used 'May Night.' The foliage holds up very well without getting that ragged look salvias can sometimes display. The vibrant blue flowers make quite a statement on top of the blackish purple, erect stems. As a repeat bloomer, it puts out its first flush in early summer and then again in late summer to early fall. Hummingbirds and butterflies will be attracted to it, enhancing its interest. Tolerant of cold, heat, humidity and drought - this perennial is up for a challenge. It does best planted in full sun in a well-drained soil.

Helleborus

Hellebores are truly care-free plants. Blooming around Lent, they have acquired the common name of Lenten Rose and are excellent for bringing early color into shady borders and in areas between shrubs and



trees. Actually, hellebores can take more sun than we think possible, too. Virtually pest and disease free, the only maintenance they require is cutting back old foliage in early spring. After the flowers have faded, the rich green foliage remains interesting. Consider Helleborus orientalis 'Pink Lady' for its unique rose purple color.



Helleborus orientalis
'Pink Lady'

Geranium macrorrhizum (Big root geranium)

This species of geranium makes a great ground cover with its flowing carpet of scented foliage. Consider 'Bevans Variety' for its clusters of dark magenta flowers with deep red sepals, medium pink 'Ingerwersen's Variety' or light pink 'Spessart'. The palmately shaped foliage will turn a red hue in autumn. There is virtually no maintenance required with this plant, just plant it in average soil in part sun to part shade. It greens up quickly in late winter, often popping out from under a heavy layer of snow looking quite fresh. We know it's a keeper when one of the nurseries we work with has it listed on their "Wicked Rugged" list.



Geranium macrorrhizum

Tick & Mosquito Spraying In Process

We are in the process of applying our second Tick & Mosquito spray. We can begin a Tick & Mosquito spray program at your residence at any time. If you are interested in beginning a program, please let [Carmin](#) know right away.

June Is the Time for:

- Setting irrigation systems to a more frequent summer schedule
- Deadheading spring flowers that have ended bloom such as peony, iris and rose
- Pinching back tall chrysanthemums, asters, joe pye weed etc. to keep plants from flopping later
- Weeding, especially under larger plants
- Finishing plantings and mulching beds
- Watering carefully anything planted this spring or last fall as root systems are not yet fully established ([see guidelines](#))
- Enjoying the changing colors of the garden
- Scouting for pests such as lacebug, scale and black vine weevil (see [Pests to Watch Out For](#) article)
- Pruning early bloomers such as azalea, rhododendron, quince and quick growing evergreen shrubs such as boxwood and holly
- Enjoying the young vegetable harvest



Lacebug damage

We hope to see you soon in your garden!

I will be conducting a garden tour for the New England Wild Flower Society in my own garden and two nearby clients on Saturday, July 21. Please [register](#) for NEWFS's Gardens of Nashoba Valley course if you would like to attend. I would love to see you there.

Sincerely,
Priscilla

Quick Links

[To Unsubscribe](#)

[PBOG Website](#)

[Click here to respond](#)

[Forward email](#)



Try it FREE today.

This email was sent to office@seedlingspecialist.com by phw@seedlingspecialist.com | [Update Profile/Email Address](#) | Instant removal with [SafeUnsubscribe™](#) | [Privacy Policy](#).

Pumpkin Brook Organic Gardening | 35 Turner Road | Townsend | MA | 01469