

Mulch, sweat, and shears



One of our first mulching jobs for the season at Beyond Montessori school in St. Catharines.

We are feeling the buzz and taking in the smells of nature waking up from its slumber. From the budding of fruit trees and flowering shrubs to sprouts of green and spring bulbs filling the garden beds, we are excited for the designing and planting ahead of us!

As the spring clean-ups and planting season merge, we are getting the garden beds prepped and taking note of mulch needed for the growing season. Mulch is a great way to retain moisture, regulate temperature for your plants, and of course, help to keep those pesky weeds from sprouting quickly. Let us know if you need some help. Your plants will be saying “mulcho gracias”!

Garden Angels

What's the dirt this month?

Tulip Farms U-Pick

The tulips are in full bloom across Ontario! Check out these flower farms where you can wander through the beautiful fields and pick your own. You can confirm dates and buy your tickets on-line.

TASC Tulip Farm

When: April 27 to May 19, 2024

Where: 433 Sixteen Road, Ridgville

Sarah Grey Pick Farm

When: April 26 to May 20, 2024

Where: 1415 Balfour St, Fenwick

JP Niagara Tulip Farm

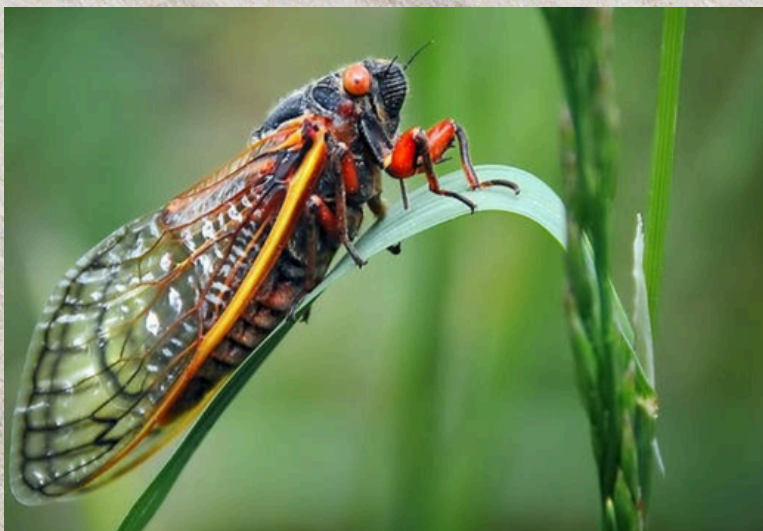
When: April 26 to May 17, 2024

Where: 1934 Centre St, Pelham

BerkelBloem

When: April 27 to May 17, 2024

Where: 466 Windham Road 12, Simcoe



LET'S GET LOUD! Double-Brood Cicada Emergence

Of the 3,400 species of cicadas in the world, only nine species are known to have developed the strange habit of disappearing underground for years at a time and then emerge in mass simultaneously. In a rare occurrence, two periodical cicada broods are appearing in a 16-state area in the Midwest and Southeast for the first time since 1803. The double-brood invasion will feature Brood XIII, Brood XIX (17 year cycle) and Brood XIX (13 year cycle). Starting in May (once soil reaches around 64 degrees Fahrenheit), the insects will tunnel to the surface to begin a loud spectacle of their monthlong search for a mate. The insects' mating song, a high-pitched buzzing, is difficult to ignore and can reach up to 100 decibels.

To prune or not to prune?

- 1. Use the right tool!** (Bypass pruners, loppers, saws) First and foremost, be sure to maintain your tools, keeping them sharp and clean. Not only can tree sap gum everything up, but tree diseases can spread from tree to tree.
- 2. Remove dead and crossing branches.** We need to remove any dead branches, or portions that show disease. By removing dead or sickly looking branches, we relieve the plant of sourcing energy to these parts and reduce the incidence of disease. This will expose the rest of the plant to more sunlight, air circulation and help promote new growth. If two limbs are crossed, entangled or otherwise competing, remove one of them completely at its base.
- 3. When to prune hydrangeas.** Hydrangeas can bloom on both old wood and new wood. Hydrangea types that bloom on old wood include big leaf and oak leaf forms. Prune these types of hydrangeas after they flower. If you prune them in winter or early spring, you'll be removing flower buds. Panicle and smooth hydrangea types that bloom on new wood can be pruned in early spring. Even if you cut off some flower buds, the plant will still bloom on new growth.
- 4. Spring flowering trees and shrubs.** Early bloomers like lilac, forsythia, wisteria, bridal wreath spirea, viburnum produce flowers on wood grown from the previous year. The best time to prune is late spring, immediately after they finish blooming. If you wait until later in the growing season, you may be removing flower buds that are beginning to form for next spring.
- 5. Summer-blooming trees and shrubs.** Plants that produce flowers on new growth from the current season can all be pruned back in their dormant phase in winter or early spring.



Deadheading old blooms on big leaf hydrangeas.

6. Deadheading perennial and annual flowers.

Deadheading spent flowers regularly will help to keep the plant blooming, as it prevents them from setting seed and allows plants to put more energy into new blooms.

7. Deciduous Trees. Prune shade trees like oak, linden, and ash when they are dormant in winter. It's easiest to see the branching structure at this time of year, and you're less likely to spread diseases through the pruning wounds.

8. Follow the 1/3 rule. The one-third rule when it comes to pruning fully established shrubs and small trees is that you can prune up to 1/3 of the plant's wood and growth at a time. There may be times when you prune more, such as when you are rejuvenating an overgrown shrub, but generally speaking, the “one-third rule” is the best guideline to follow.



DID YOU KNOW?

You can enjoy delicious hosta shoots from your garden as they begin to sprout in the spring! These nutritious and tasty greens have been grown and harvested as a vegetable in Asian cultures for centuries. Similar to the flavour and crunch of asparagus, add them raw to your salad, or simply sautee them in olive oil, salt and pepper. If you miss the opportunity to cut the shoots in spring, you can wait for the leaves to unfurl and harvest the leaves as a substitute for spinach or other leafy greens.

Diggin' for laughs

What do you get if you cross a monkey with a flower?

A chimp-pansy.

Why was the flower always late?

Because it was lacka-daisy-cal.



What do you call a flower magician that only knows one magic trick? A one trick peony.

Why did the mulch go to therapy?

It had a lot of deep-rooted issues.

How did the flower manage to drive the car as quick as possible to the airport?

By putting the petal to the metal.

What do you call a shrub that talks a lot?

A chatterboxwood!

Tree Trivia

1. I am the tallest tree in the world. What tree am I?
2. Where can you find the oldest living tree?
3. The bark of which tree is also known as "nature's aspirin"?
4. What is the stoutest tree in the world?
5. What is Ontario's provincial tree?

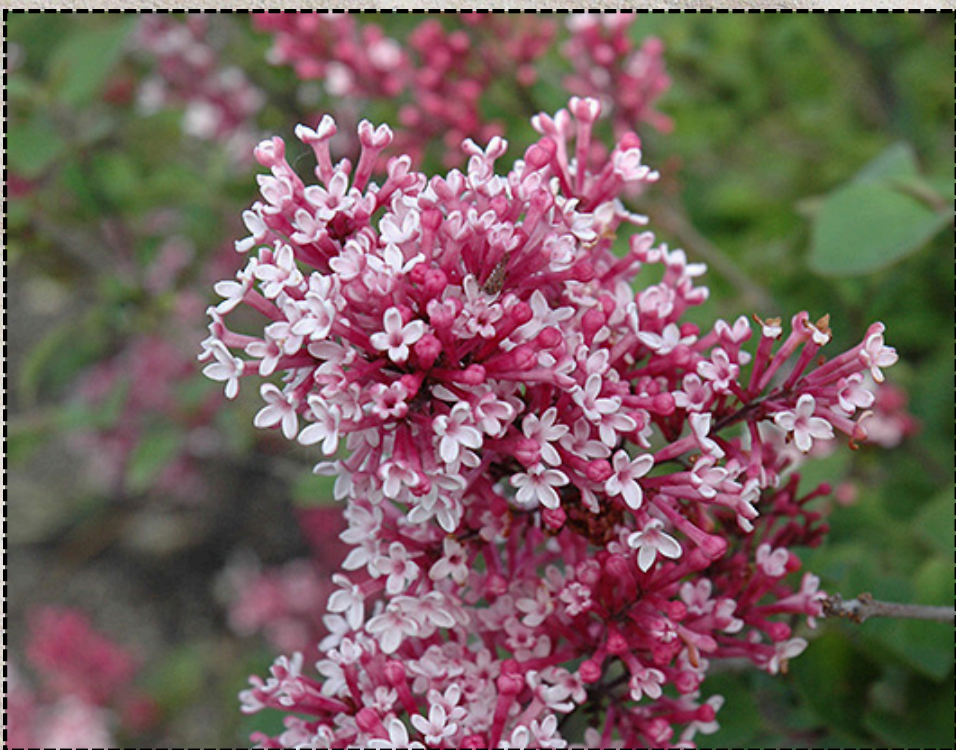


Trivia Answers Below

Trivia Answers

1. The Hyperion, which is a coastal redwood (*Sequoia sempervirens*) and is located somewhere in the heart of Redwood National Park in California.
2. The Methuselah, a Great Basin bristlecone pine is 4,854 years old and lies somewhere among the aptly named Methuselah Grove in the White Mountains of Eastern California.
3. Willow
4. Arbol del Tule (The Tree of Tule) in Oaxaca, Mexico, is a Montezuma cypress that is upwards of 1600 years old with a circumference of 42m and a diameter of 14m.
5. The province adopted the Eastern White Pine as an official symbol on May 1, 1984.

Angels' Picks



Tinkerbelle Lilac

Plant Type	Perennial, shrub
Plant Family	Oleaceae
Genus	Syringa
Common names	Lilac
Exposure	Full Sun
Season of Interest	Spring (Late), Summer (Early)
Height	4' - 6'
Spread	4' - 6'
Soil	Dry to moist
Maintenance	Low, prune immediately after flowering.



Bowl of Beauty Garden Peony

Plant Type	Perennial, Shrub
Plant Family	Paeoniaceae
Genus	Paeonia
Common names	Peony
Exposure	Full Sun, Partial Sun
Season of Interest	Spring (Late), Summer (Early)
Height	2' - 3'
Spread	2' - 3'
Soil	Well-Drained, Moist
Maintenance	Low, remove spent flowers as they fade, cut back plant after foliage has died in the fall.