



Notes from

HORNBAKER GARDENS

"The Princeton Perennial People"
22937 1140 N. Ave., Princeton, Illinois 61356

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www.hornbakergardens.com

Peak Iris Bloom Right On Time

The iris season appears to be right on time this year. The recent heat should bring them along quickly now. We anticipate that the peak bloom season will be the last 14 days of May, into the first few days of June. Naturally, the early blooming dwarfs have been blooming since early May, and the Border Bearded and Intermediate Bearded are blooming now.

Please note that we will be closed on

Sundays, even during the peak of the iris season. However, we will be open on Memorial Day, Monday, May 31.

For those of you who have never purchased irises from us, a short explanation of the procedure is in order. We take orders for the irises here in the spring. Customers walk through the field during bloom time and select the varieties they

wish to order. The orders are placed and paid for now, and we dig the orders in July, usually a few days after July 4. We can ship the iris rhizomes to you, or you can pick them up. Most of our customers pick up their orders in July so that they can see the daylily field blooming at that time.

Yessir, Yessir, Three Bags Full

Customers often ask us to explain the difference between the three different bagged goods that we carry, so we'll take this opportunity to describe these products to a lot of you at once.

Better Earth Compost is a great soil amendment. The primary ingredients are recycled yard waste and manure, composted to a rich organic mix that

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RETAIL HOURS

We are open Monday through Saturday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. We are Closed on Sundays. We will be open on Memorial Day, Monday, May 31, which should be a great day for the irises.

OPEN HOUSE

Our seventeenth annual Open House and Hosta Walk will be held on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, June 10, 11, and 12. Refreshments will be served, and drawings for prizes will be held each day. We will also have a selection of special-priced plants.



Granite Is Forever

We just received a new shipment of granite items, so we are well supplied with an outstanding collection of Japanese lanterns, basins, and benches. There are two new, interesting benches. One has a curved seat with fluted legs—very classy. The other has a back that makes it surprisingly comfortable.

Several antique millstones and troughs are still available. These are the genuine articles, used by farmers in China, and collected by the same compa-

ny that carves our new pieces. Customers are using the millstones as decorative pieces in a variety of ways—as a large stepping stone in a special spot, or made into a bubbling fountain. The troughs make outstanding planters. One would also make an excellent replacement for that plastic dog watering bowl that keeps blowing away when it gets empty. In fact, we guarantee them against blowing away. What more can you ask for?

Rich's Picks Of The Newer Hostas

Here is a short list and description of some of the better, relatively new, hostas that I am particularly high on. All of these we have had for two or more years—long enough to make sure that they are good growers and performers.

I'm a real sucker for yellow centered hostas. They are so showy that they demand attention. 'Thunderbolt' and 'Lakeside Shore Master' are both blue with a splash of yellow in the center of each leaf. 'Paradigm', 'Captain Kirk', and 'St. Paul' are all newer varieties in which the yellow centers intensify as the season progresses.

There are several green centered sports of 'Sum and Substance' (this year's Hosta of the Year). The one with the widest yellow margins seems to be 'Sum of All'. It should be a monster, having more green in it than its parent plant.

Two of the flashiest yellow margined hostas we have ever seen are 'Liberty' and 'Band of Gold'. 'Liberty' is a wide margined sport of the ever-popular 'Sagae'. 'Band of Gold' will form a large clump of very showy foliage.

'Zounds' has always been one of my favorite yellow varieties because of its bright yellow color and its extreme puckering. 'Laura and Darrell' (green with

yellow margins) and 'Dick Ward' (yellow with green margins) are excellent sports of 'Zounds'.

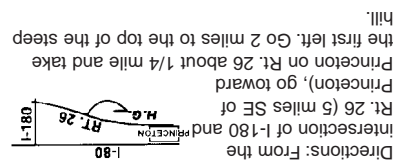
Yessir, Yessir, continued from page 1

really improves the soil. Till or fork it in when starting a new bed or area. It can be used as a mulch, but we would suggest a wood product for mulching, since it will last longer.

1-Step is what we have been calling the pine bark product that we carry. It is a good soil amendment also, but we recommend it primarily as a mulch. We mulch everything we plant in the gardens, fields, and yard. Mulch will help smother weeds, hold moisture in the ground, and improve the soil as it decomposes. We do not recommend a ground cloth or "weed barrier" under the mulch. The cloth keeps the mulch from improving the soil, and the mulch also seems to blow away much more easily off of the

cloth, exposing it in an unsightly way. (We also carry a pine bark mulch in bulk, which is a less finely ground form of the 1-Step.)

The third bagged product that we carry is Pro-Gro organic fertilizer, which is a blend of eleven organic ingredients. We have been using it in our gardens and fields for several years, as well as around trees and shrubs, and even on the lawn. It is a 5-3-4 formulation. It contains rock powders and other products that break down over a long period of time. You can use it liberally, without fear of burning the plants. We throw a handful in the hole whenever we set a plant out, and broadcast it throughout the gardens every spring.



GIFT CERTIFICATES AVAILABLE



We accept

Princeton, Illinois 61356

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