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## Daylily Season Approaching

Good rains this spring have been great for the daylilies. The field is in beautiful shape. There are always some varieties blooming by the end of June, so we are hoping for a fair amount of color by the weekend of July 2 and 3. We will keep you posted on our blog and on Facebook. The peak of daylily season usually starts around July 4 and runs for two or three weeks. Some of the later bloomers don't start blooming until the end of July and continue into August. We will be able to offer the majority of varieties in clump form.

We sell our daylilies three different ways.

First, we have over 50 varieties potted up and available from the time that we open in spring. (We pot most of the daylilies in mini-clump form—4-5 fans in a larger pot. They sell for \$15.00 or \$25.00, depending on variety.) Second,



*Barbara Mitchell*

we take orders during the season, and then dig divisions (generally double fans) in August after the bloom season is over. You get them bareroot, so it is important that you get them planted right away. Orders can be picked up

on an agreed upon date, or we can ship them.

The third way for you to buy our daylilies is in clump form. This has become the most popular way for our customers. We dig clumps while you are here to pick them out, dip the roots in water, and drop the clumps in plastic bags. You not only get a great deal, because you get so many fans for the money, but you get the daylilies right away, so that you can enjoy their blooms the rest of the season. We have to hold back enough of each variety for propagation and to fill orders for divisions, so the number of clumps available for any given variety will depend on our supply. In many cases, we can only spare one or two clumps of a variety. So get here early

for best selection.

Please note our hours. We will still be open Sundays through July 10, which should be a prime weekend for daylilies. After that, we will return to being open Monday through Saturday, 8:00 to 5:00.

## Pruning Back Perennials

Jane Morris, who was our head gardener for 11 years, gave a wonderful workshop here recently on pruning perennials. She had suggested that we

### RETAIL HOURS

Through July 10, we will be open Monday through Saturday, 8:00 to 7:00, and Sundays 12:00 to 5:00. But we will be closed on July 4. From July 11 through October 10, we will be open Monday through Saturday, 8:00 to 5:00, and closed on Sundays. We will be closed on Labor Day, September 5.

do the workshop in early to mid-June because that is when many perennials benefit by being cut back. Generally, we are talking about plants that bloom later in the summer. By cutting them back now, you can keep them a little shorter and stronger, and they will branch out and be more floriferous when they bloom.

Perennials that benefit from a June pruning include mums, asters, hibiscus, tall sedums, Heliopsis, tall phlox, Platycodon, Eupatorium and Echinacea. Obviously, if you are going to prune any of these, do it as soon as possible after reading this. You don't want to get too close to their bloom time before you

cut them back. Experiment with some of your plants, and you will soon learn how pruning back can make for a more sensational show later in the summer.

Jane also spoke about cutting back plants that have already bloomed. In some cases, such as with Salvia, taking the scissors to the plant will result in another flush of blooms. In other cases, when the plant has bloomed and the foliage is starting to look ratty, cutting the plant back will result in a new flush of nice looking foliage. Jane mentioned Aquilegia, Stylophorum, Tradescantia, Nepeta, and Geraniums in this last group.

# Hot Hydrangeas



Hydrangea 'Vanilla Strawberry'

Hydrangeas have really been hot this year, and we just got resupplied with two of the hottest ones. 'Bella Anna' is a pink *arborescens* type in the same family as the old reliable 'Annabelle'. The excellent pink color holds up well, and is touted as being a better color and a better grower than 'Invincibelle Spirit'. 'Bella Anna' will grow around 3' tall and wide. Cut it back to about knee high in the spring.

'Vanilla Strawberry' is the other variety that we can't seem to keep in stock. It is a *paniculata* type with huge white flowers that turn pink and then red, and hold the red color for a long time. New white flowers continue to come, making for a spectacular multi-color show. The *paniculata* types grow into a taller shrub form. Pruning it back a bit in the spring will help shape it and make it bushier, but you don't want to cut it back like you do the *arborescens* type.

Different types of hydrangeas need pruned in different ways. I wrote up a guide to pruning the four main types of hydrangeas, which you can access on our website. Select Gardening Help under the Resources tab. We also have the guide available as a handout here at the Gardens.

## Japanese Tree Lilac

The Japanese tree lilac, *Syringa reticulata*, is a beautiful, small ornamental tree that really puts on a great show. The tree lilac blooms later than the shrubs. This picture was taken in our gardens on June 15 of this year. The huge, white blooms are very fragrant. The tree grows around 20-25' tall with a spread of 15-20', is hardy to Zone 3, and is generally a disease resistant, trouble free plant.

We have three large multi-stemmed specimens still in stock, along with a couple of small single stemmed trees. They are on our Summer Specials list at 25% off.



*Syringa reticulata*

## Rocket Tree

This tree makes me want to sing "Rocket Tree", a song yet to be made up, sung to the tune of Elton John's "Rocket Man". It is *Picea glauca* 'Pendula', better known as a weeping white spruce. Whereas the tips of many weeping evergreens bend over and weep downwards whenever you quit staking them, this beauty shoots straight to the sky without being staked at all. It forms a fantastic, blue, vertical accent in the garden without taking up a lot of room, and is very hardy. The specimen in this picture has been in our gardens for 12 to 15 years, I would guess.

We have several on hand, in two sizes, and they are on our Summer Specials list at 25% off, so come and get one while you can.



*Picea glauca* 'Pendula'

## Open House Winners

Open House was busy and fun. It was great to see so many of you here. Thank you all for your business this spring. We'll have a good stock of plants all summer, and the daylilies are about to explode, so we hope to see you again.

Friday's prize winners were Jan Prater of Lewistown, IL; Dorothy Wilson of McNabb, IL; and Kelsey Casolari of Lostant, IL. Saturday's winners were Parke Davis of Newark, IL; Arthur DeSommer of Walnut, IL; and Juanita Nerstheimer of Sterling, IL. And Sunday's winners were Marilyn Ellison of Homer Glen, IL; Tatty Monroe of Princeton, IL; and Greg Lazar of Oglesby, IL.