

Early Iris Season

Everything is early this year, and the irises are no exception. We were thinking that we may be in the peak of the bloom season by the end of April because the SDBs were blooming in very early April (whereas they usually bloom in early May), but some recent cool weather has slowed things down a bit. It now appears that the main bloom season for the tall bearded irises will be during the first two weeks of May. We will update the progress of the iris bloom on the blog on our website.

Note that we are open on Sundays, so be sure to catch our last big iris show. As we explained in our earlier newsletter, we are cutting way back on our iris production in order to put up a building where the iris field is located. For all of you iris lovers, that's the bad news.

The good news is that we are offering a great deal on the purchase of irises this year. If you purchase \$30.00 or more worth of irises, you get a 20% discount. If you purchase \$50.00 or more, you get a 30% discount. So this is the year to load up!

For those of you who have never purchased irises from us, a short explanation 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 may dig earlier this year since the season is running so early.) 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.



'City Lights'

Retail Hours

Through July 8, we will be open
 Monday through Saturday, 8:00 a.m.
 to 5:00 p.m., and Sunday noon to 5:00 p.m.
 We will be closed on Wednesday, July 4.
 From July 9 through October 10, we will be
 open Monday through Saturday,
 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., and we will
 be closed on Sundays.

Open House June 8, 9 And 10

Our annual Open House and Hosta Walk will be held on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, June 8, 9 and 10. The hostas should be looking great at that time. Refreshments will be served, and drawings for prizes will be held each day. We will also have a selection of specially priced plants, including a good selection of hostas. Look for specials on some of our Shop items. You never know what we might decide to feature. The Open House specials list will be available on our website by June 7th.

Picks Of The Week

Molly, David and Rich have started a new feature here at the Gardens that we are calling the Picks of the Week. Each of us will make a selection of a plant that we like a lot and that we want people to know about. We will post our Picks of the Week on our website, via the blog, giving a short description of the plants and explaining why we like them. We will then also have a display of those plants on the corner of the tree and shrub area, where you can find them easily.

We will post the picks and set up the display on Monday of each week. Molly's first pick is *Euphorbia* 'Bonfire', a low growing, dark foliaged plant with bright yellow bracts in spring. David's pick is *Taxodium* 'Peve Minaret', a huggable dwarf Bald Cypress. Rich's pick is *Amelanchier* 'Autumn Brilliance' an excellent small Serviceberry tree with white spring flowers and good fall foliage color.



Euphorbia 'Bonfire'

Repellex Systemic Animal Repellent

This could be huge! We've been hearing about Repellex for the last year, and we have a supply on hand now. Repellex is a systemic animal repellent, using capsaicin (hot pepper) as the active ingredient. It works by being absorbed into a plant, resulting in a bad tasting plant that the animals won't want to eat. The Repellex tablets are placed under your mulch, next to a growing plant's root system. Once the repellent is absorbed over 7-30 days, the repellent will stay active for up to one year. Since the repellent is internally treating the plant, it will not wash off in the rain like traditional repellents.

Here's my favorite part: This repellent is labeled and approved for repelling deer, rabbits, moles, voles, gophers, groundhogs, dogs, cats and feral hogs. So rejoice, all you gardeners who have been complaining about the feral hogs eating your hostas!

Don't use Repellex on food crops unless you want some really funky tasting broccoli.

The number of tablets needed to treat a plant varies by height and width. Apply one tablet for every foot of plant height and width (height + width). In season reapplications may be necessary with very fast growing plants. The Repellex folks have informed us that hostas don't seem to take up the Repellex as easily as some other plants, so they suggest using an extra tablet to be effective.

We would love to get some feedback from anyone who tries Repellex. We need to know how well it works.

WORKSHOPS & EVENTS...

Check out the events tab on our website for all the details.

WORKSHOPS:

Pruning Hydrangeas and Other Shrubs—

Saturday, April, 28 at 10 a.m. with Rich and David Hornbaker

Fairy Gardens—Saturday, May 12 at 10 a.m. with Molly Hornbaker Blogg

Cut Flower Arranging—Saturday, May 19, at 10 a.m. with David Hornbaker.

Kathy O'Malley on Photography in the Garden—Saturday, May 26, at 10 a.m. with our favorite former WGN radio personality!

Pottery Water Features—Saturday, June 2 at 10 a.m. with David Hornbaker.

Pruning Perennials—Saturday, June 9 at 10 a.m. with our former head gardener, now known as The Gardening Governess, Jane Morris.

EVENTS:

Kids' Containers for Mother's Day—Saturday, May 5 at 10 a.m.

Photography by Nicole Isaacson—Saturday, May 19 and Sunday, May 20. Please call Nicole at 815-878-6406 to book a session time.

Hornbaker Gardens bocce ball tournament—Saturday, July 14 at 1 p.m.