



# Growing Matters

## Greetings

I found it a bit difficult to get in the mood to write a fall newsletter since it seems summer has just arrived. I hope you don't resent me for sending it to you like I resent getting back to school flyers in the mail.

I'm going to state the obvious just to get it out there. It has been a cool, wet summer. There are pros and cons to this and for the most part, as a gardener and nursery owner, I appreciated not having to turn on the irrigation system and change my cloths twice a day because of the heat.

The perennials enjoyed the moisture a little too much, growing taller and lush,



and as a result, the gardens were floppier and weedier than usual.

Abundance of moisture was not the only problem in the garden this year. The woodchuck population seems to have soared, wreaking havoc on perennial gardens across the region. The only living beings that appreciated this were the deer, who got a little reprieve from being the most despised garden pests.

I think it says something about the character of the gardener that despite the battles and losses, we continue to find joy in those things that survive.

- Vicky Hilleges

## How Many Perennials Can a Woodchuck Eat

The number one question I received from customers this year was, "What can I plant that the woodchucks wont eat?" My response was some variation of "I don't know. From the reports I've been getting from other gardeners, it seems they will eat just about anything."

I don't want to give the chunky little critters an unnecessarily bad rap, so I thought I would do a little research. Guess what I found out. Yup, it seems they will eat just about anything herbaceous. Cornell Cooperative Extension of Rockland County states, "Woodchucks eat mostly grasses and succulent summer plants. Their preferred foods include clover, alfalfa, plantain and herbaceous

perennials." They didn't even bother listing individual perennials.

I did find a non-profit site called the Internet Center for Wildlife Damage Management that provided a list of plants that have "Possible Resistance to Chucks". I've included some of the perennials with potential woodchuck resistance on the following page.

Developing a list of plants woodchucks don't prefer is one of the top three ways of controlling damage. Fencing to keep woodchucks out and trapping prior to April/May when they have young were the two other ways recommended to control damage. In general, repellent sprays were not recommended.

## Garden Gate Chat

"When is the best time to prune my Rose of Sharon?" Rose of Sharon (*Hibiscus syriacus*) is a mid to late summer blooming shrub that typically grows 8-10 feet tall. One exception is a miniature Rose of Sharon called Lil' Kim that has white flowers with a showy red eye and only grows three to four feet tall. Rose of Sharon prefers full sun (six or more hours) and attracts hummingbirds and butterflies. It blooms on old wood, so it is best to prune the plant after it has finished flowering in the late summer or early fall.

## Pippi's Plant Spotlight



Hosta

'First Frost'

2010 Hosta

of the Year

A newer sport of

'Halcyon' featuring

intense blue-green

leaves with irregular,

yellow margins. The

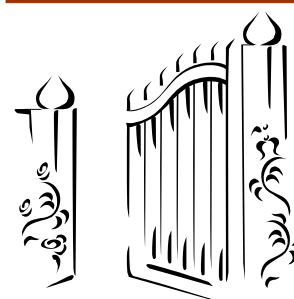
margins turn white in

summer. The leaves

hold up well until 'first

frost'.

- ❖ Part shade
- ❖ 16" tall x 36" wide
- ❖ lavender flower
- ❖ Attracts butterflies
- ❖ Zones 3-9





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## Gift Certificates Available

### Woodchuck Resistant Perennials?

As stated previously, it seems that woodchucks, like deer, will eat just about anything if they are hungry enough. Following is a list of perennials that was developed by the Internet Center for Wildlife Damage Management based on their personal experience and the experience of their readers.

- |                                     |                             |                          |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| Achillea (yarrow)                   | Dianthus                    | Iris                     |
| Amsonia (Bluestar)                  | Dicentra (Bleeding Heart)   | Lavandula (Lavender)     |
| Artemisia                           | Ferns                       | Nepeta (Catmint)         |
| Asarum (Wild Ginger)                | Gaillardia (Blanket Flower) | Oenothera                |
| Asclepias tuberosa (Butterfly weed) | Geranium (Cranebill)        | Ornamental grasses       |
| Astilbe                             | Helleborus (Lenten Rose)    | Paeonia (Peony)          |
| Chelone (Turtlehead)                | Hemerocallis (Daylily)      | Perovskia (Russian Sage) |
| Convallaria (Lily of the Valley)    | Heuchera                    | Salvia                   |
| Coreopsis                           | Heucherella                 | Sedum                    |
|                                     | Hosta                       | Stachys (Lamb's Ear)     |

**Special Dates**

**Pippi's Garden Club**  
**August 31<sup>st</sup> @ 6:00 pm:**  
*Perennials for Late Summer Interest*

**Pippi's Fall Sale**  
**Sept. 13<sup>th</sup>, 10 am - 4 pm**

*"A garden is never so good as it will be next year."-- Thomas Cooper*

### Pippi's Locations & Hours

**CNY Regional Market Authority:**  
 2100 Park Street  
 Syracuse, NY

**Open: May 2<sup>nd</sup> – Oct 17<sup>th</sup>**  
**Thurs. 10:00 AM – 5:00 PM (Shed A/19&21)**  
**Sat. 7:00 AM - 2:00 PM (Shed D/10+12)**

**Home Location:**  
 12 Sherry Lane  
 Kirkville, NY 13082  
 (Sherry Ln. is located off Fyler Rd.,  
 ¼ mile east of N. Kirkville Rd.)

**Open: April 22<sup>th</sup> – Oct. 17<sup>th</sup>**  
**Wed. & Fri. 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM**  
**Or By Appointment**

*New Hours*

