



Shaler Garden Club Horticultural Hints

June 2017

- 1) Tie colored yarn around your lilies in spring so you know what color they are in Fall when digging and transplanting (or gifting).
- 2) Plant mosquito-repelling flowers and herbs (especially near areas prone to collect water). Mosquitoes don't like the smell of: basil, lavender, rosemary and peppermint; geranium, marigold and pennyroyal; catnip, citronella, lemon balm, and garlic.
- 3) If you find bugs crawling when you wash your herbs, dip them in a mild vinegar solution (1 tablespoon vinegar to 1 cup water).
- 4) Building a raised bed -- make sure they are no more than 3-4 feet wide. Reaching over 2 feet can strain your back.

June Gardening Events

4-10 National Garden Week

- 7 Bee Wise: Plant Natives; 11am - 1pm; Learn about rain gardens, native plants, honeybees, pick up a free plant, and sample Penn State ice cream. Allegheny County Courthouse Courtyard Garden; 436 Grant Street, Pittsburgh 15219
- 10 Rose Day at Renziehausen Park, 1-4pm; Free & open to the public
Guided tours, workshops, rosarians available to answer questions
1400 Pinoak Drive, McKeesport, PA 15132
- 10 Harmony Museum's Annual Herb & Garden Fair; 9am; Plant exchange, vegetables, herbs, roses, ornamentals, expert advice, food & entertainment; 303 Mercer Street, Harmony, PA harmonymuseum.org
- 16 & 17 Sewickley Garden Tour; \$40 for 5 beautiful gardens;
www.sewickleygardens.com

The philosopher who said that work well done never needs doing over,
never weeded a garden.

~ ~ *Ray D. Everson*

To-Do List for Zone 6

- 1) For best results with container plantings, use large containers and add organic matter such as compost to the soil to increase its water-holding capacity. Self-watering containers with their own reservoir will decrease watering frequency.
- 2) As spring bulbs finish blooming, allow their foliage to die back naturally. The leaves need to carry out photosynthesis to make food that will provide energy for next year's bloom.
- 3) Pinch the growing points from the stem tips of mum plants when they get 3-4 inches high.
- 4) Keep weeds pulled and mulch in place.
- 5) Watch for early disease problems and take care of them before they get worse.

Planting Annuals: Two Key Tips

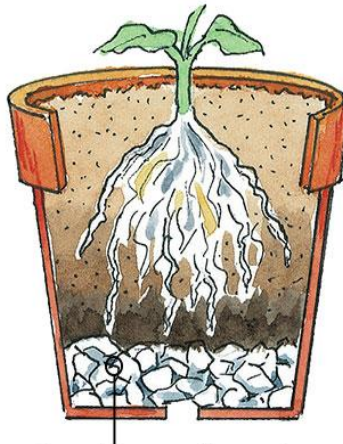
Whether you're planting annuals in containers or in the ground, follow these two tips to make them settle in and look their best through the months to come. These tips may seem a little counter-intuitive, but they work!

- 1) If the plant is in bloom, cut off the flowers, trimming the stems back to just above a set of leaves. This will make the plant direct its energy into taking root in its new container or the garden soil. Although this technique will delay the floral display, it creates a plant better equipped to grow and bloom all summer.
- 2) When planting annuals, always loosen the roots before setting them into the planting hole. If the plant is not root bound, you can simply loosen up the roots using your hand. If the plant is root bound (roots a tangled mass in the shape of the pot they were growing in), go ahead and cut off any thick jumble of roots at the bottom, and then use a sharp knife or scissors to make several vertical cuts around the edge of the root ball. Then use your fingers to reach into the root ball from the bottom and loosen up its shape. The clean cuts you made will stimulate new root growth when the plant is in its new home.

Skip adding gravel to the bottom of a container. Soil scientists have proven that water does not move easily between the fine particles in potting mix and coarser material, like stones. It actually causes water to drain more slowly and the potting mix can stay saturated -- the opposite of the intended effect. However, it is all right to cover the hole with something that lets water drain but prevents soil from washing out, although you don't need to. A square cut from a plastic mesh bag is very effective, or a shard of broken terra-cotta, piece of landscape fabric, or coffee filter will all do the trick.



The wettest soil is at the bottom.



Gravel moves the wettest soil up in the pot, closer to the roots, which can lead to rot.