



## HORTICULTURE DAY

### FALL COLOUR:

Summer is almost over and the garden has begun to show it's age. The summer blooms have begun to fade but the season is not over for most of us gardeners. We need to look at the garden centres to see what is new and what is in bloom for fall.

Traditionally we see fall mums come out on the market this time of year in their bronzes, golds, reds, purples, and yellows. But they are not the only fall plant available to us. There are the fall asters in pinks, purples, and whites. Or the late blooming anemones that can grow up to 3 feet tall in beautiful shades of pink, burgundy and white. Or the workhorse in any garden, the ever popular drought tolerant sedum. This plant with its red, blue grey, or even green and white foliage can withstand the heat of the summer and burst into bloom late in the fall.

Want something that's really going to make a statement? How about a perennial southern bell hibiscus. With flowers of burgundy, pink, white, and shades in between. These bloom with flowers as big as dinner plates. Then there are the shrubs that bloom late in the season: Rose of Sharon, blue mist spirea, and hydrangeas. These will last well into the first frost.

Then there are the plants with the beautiful fall colours. Those that change like the bright red of a burning bush, the burgundy of a cotoneaster, or the yellow and golds of viburnum. The season is far from over. We still have a few more months to enjoy before old man winter arrives. Don't give up on the garden yet.

### PUTTING THE GARDEN TO BED:

Just because Fall is around the corner does not mean that gardeners have taken time to rest. There are still a lot of things to be done in the garden. We need to prepare for winter.

- This means continuously harvesting our fall crops. I like to leave parsnips and carrots in the ground as long as possible. The cold weather will intensify their sweet flavour.
- Remove all the dead leaf matter and discarded fruits and vegetables from the garden. We don't want this to become a place for our insects and pests to winter over.
- Your lawn is important too this time of year. Now is the time to add more grass seed, fix the bare patches, or even put down sod. Remember too, if we don't have heavy rainfall – keep watering the grass until the ground freezes.

- Rake off the fall leaves so that they don't create a heavy mat that smothers out the grass. I know many gardeners who will use their lawn more and will continuously mulch the leaves often so that it becomes small leaf matter that will break down and fertilize the lawns.
- Depending on the weather you may need to cut your grass until the first week of December. Grass should be cut between 4 and 5 centimetres long, it prevents the mice and voles from wintering over and creating awful tunnel damage in the spring.
- What about the begonias, cannas, daleas, and glads growing in the garden? Once the first killing frost has happened and their leaves turn black it is time to dig up these bulbs and prepare them to bring indoors to store for the winter. They will not survive our heavy, cold, freezing winter.
- Remove all the soil from the bulbs, rhizomes or tumors, allow them to dry in the sun for a few hours, then store them flat in a frost free cold storage location. They prefer to be kept in the dark. Check these bulbs throughout the winter to prevent them from getting diseased, beginning to mould, or just drying up.
- Once the spring weather starts you can dig them back into pots, put them upstairs in the sun, water them well and you'll have blooms for next year.
- Glad bulbs can be a little bit more fussy and will need to be protected from an insecticide before they're stored for the winter.
- Most of this happens around mid to late October. I will continue to work in the garden for as long as possible.
- Make sure you stay ahead of the weeds this time of year because you don't want them to go to seed and create a bumper crop of weeds for us next spring.
- Enjoy those sunny fall beautiful winter days in the garden before the blanket of white will bury everything deep.



**Thank you to Denise and Nancy  
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