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We've been too  
busy to remember!

The next  
installment of  
*The History of  
Behnke Nurseries*  
will appear in the  
Fall issue of  
GardeNews.

## That Makes Scents!

— by Larry Hurley, Perennial Plant Specialist

One of the real joys of gardening is enjoying the fragrance given off by many plants. Pleasure is subjective, and what may be fragrant to one person may be overpowering to another. For instance, *Eleagnus pungens* 'Fruitlandii' is an easy-to-grow, fall-flowering shrub, with a long blooming season. The flowers are small and barely noticeable, but intensely fragrant. A lot of people like it, but for me it's too powerful and slightly unpleasant. Also, as with the sense of taste, different people have more developed senses and are able to detect more nuances in odor than others. (My senses of taste and smell were held back to repeat the third grade and never graduated.) Lastly, always beware of the term "interesting" when reading a description by a horticulturist; as in, "this species has an interesting flower," or "that species has an interesting fragrance." The spring-blooming bulb *Frittilaria* (Crown Imperial) has an interesting fragrance, especially if you happen to step on one of the bulbs. Strongly reminiscent of stepping on a skunk.

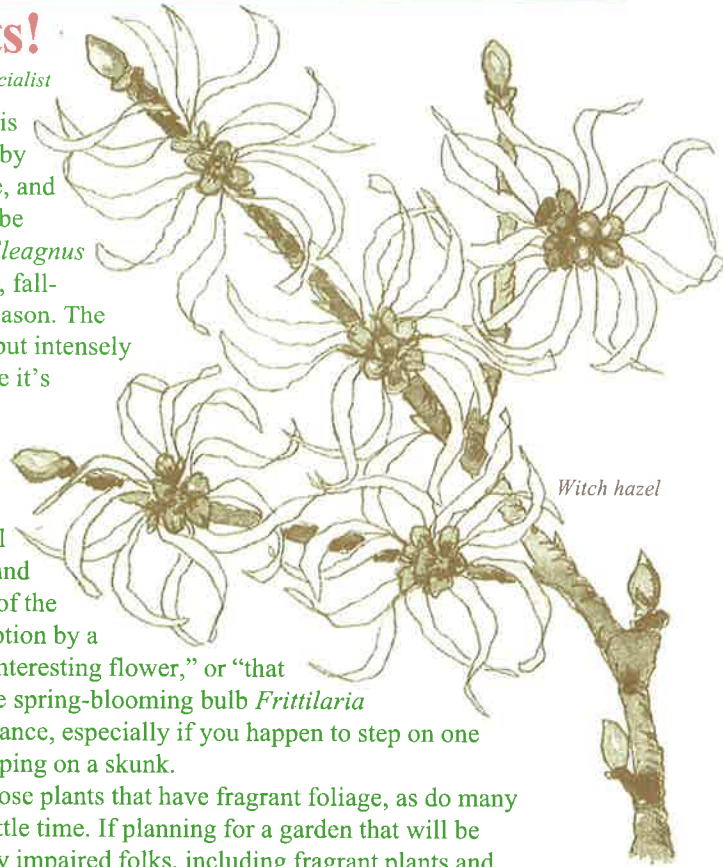
Given short shrift in this article are those plants that have fragrant foliage, as do many herbs, for instance. So many smells, so little time. If planning for a garden that will be visited by children, the elderly, or visually impaired folks, including fragrant plants and plants with interesting leaf textures can greatly increase the pleasure of your guests. I'm also not going to talk about roses, another article in itself. Some are fragrant, some aren't. Fragrance is there for a reason, before the plant breeders get involved: to attract something (such as a pollinator), or repel something (such as a stomach). Plants with showy flowers are not always fragrant: they attract pollinators visually instead of by scent. Scented flowers are often white and are often pollinated at night by moths rather than in the daytime by bees.

Below are some of my favorite scented plants. All are carried by Behnke's, but not all are in stock at all times.

Three early spring shrubs that are fragrant are daphne, *Hamamelis* hybrids, and mahonia. I have just added two daphnes to my garden. Daphne is a broadleaved evergreen that needs protection from strong winter winds. It's a winter/early spring bloomer with a strong, lemony scent. I planted it near the door so that I can smell it when I come into and out of the house. I have great expectations. Here's a helpful hint: site fragrant plants where you are likely to enjoy them — by the door, on the deck, in the kitchen window — and somewhere sheltered where the scent will linger and not be immediately blown away.

I have two cultivars of witch hazel. The coppery-colored *Hamamelis* 'Jelena' blooms as early as January, while the bright yellow 'Arnold Promise' follows in February and early March. Cold and snow don't bother the flowers, and on warm, sunny days, the unique (unique is a lot better than "interesting") fragrance fills the yard.

(Continued on page 2)





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**EDITOR-IN-CHIEF:**

Sonja Behnke Festerling

**MANAGING EDITOR:**

Judith Conway

**HORTICULTURAL ADVISOR:**

Larry Hurley

**LAYOUT/DESIGN/ILLUSTRATION:**

Lori Hicks

**CONTRIBUTING WRITERS:**

Mike Bader

Randy Best

Judith Conway

James Dronenburg

Lori Hicks

Larry Hurley

Helmut Jaehnigen

Melodie Likel

Steven Mott

Susan O'Hara

Ellen B. Schaffer

Gene Sumi

Chris Upton

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(Scents, continued from page 1)

Mahonia, (Oregon grape, Oregon grapeholly), a broadleaved evergreen native to western North America, has showy yellow blooms with a citrusy fragrance in February or early March. I am particularly fond of *M. bealei*, a coarse-textured species, which has great character and really perfumes my yard.

*Viburnum carlesii* (Koreanspice viburnum) is a deciduous shrub with showy, pink-tinged-white flower clusters that appear here in April. The flowers have a strong "spicy" fragrance. Easy to grow and pest-free, this shrub should be more widely planted.

I'm a great fan of magnolias, many of which marry the amusing traits of beautiful flowers, delightful lemony fragrance and early blooming. (Frost warning! Whack!!) In those years when Mom Nature allows Star and Saucer Magnolias to bloom, they are my favorite flowering trees.

Some of our perennials are sweetly scented. Peonies immediately come to mind. Stick your nose deep into a peony (or tree peony) flower, and inhale deeply, perhaps first inspecting for ants. You will be whisked away to Great Grandmother's Garden. Like roses, some peonies are more fragrant than others, and we do try to note that on our descriptive signs. Not only are they a great garden flower, but they make great cut flowers as well.

Lily of the Valley is so delicate, and has such a short blooming time, but a vase full is such a delight. Plant a few potfuls in a shady place and in a few years you will have plenty to cut. Albert and Rose Behnke were very fond of lily of the valley. It was popular in Germany for boys to give to their girlfriends.

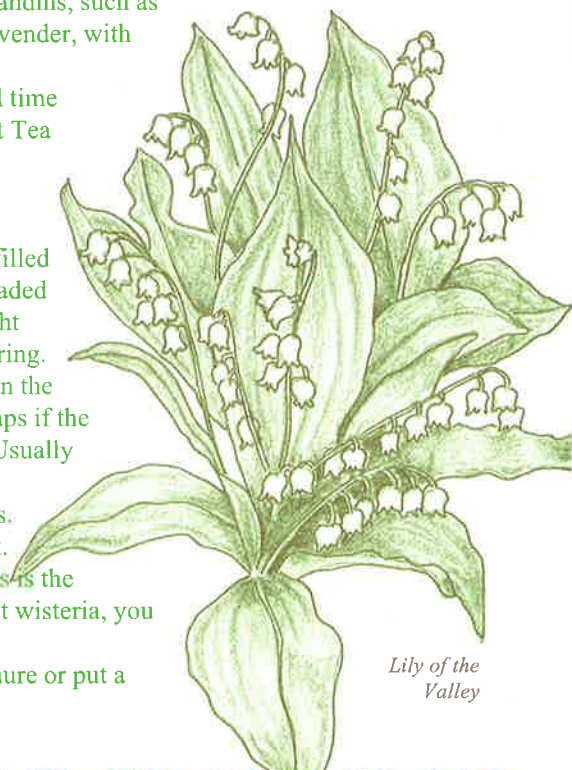
I don't have quite enough sunlight to do much with *Dianthus* (carnations, pinks) at home, but I have a lot of experience growing them at our Largo perennial nursery. All have a light, cinnamony fragrance, and no perennial garden is complete without a couple of cultivars. 'Bath's Pink' is easy to grow and heat-tolerant, and 'Snow Flurries', a cute little overlooked miniature white, is very fragrant indeed. *Dianthus* bloom best in late spring, and need excellent soil drainage.

Many of the lilies, especially the Oriental varieties, are very fragrant. Plant them as bulbs in the early spring or potted plants in late spring, and you will be delighted with the results.

If you have sun and good drainage, try lavender. It's too humid here for lavenders to be carefree, but many people are successful with them. The English lavenders, such as 'Hidcote' and 'Munstead' are the traditional sachet varieties, while the hybrid lavandins, such as 'Grosso' are easier to grow. Or try the annual French lavender, with larger, attractive flowers. It's a good container plant.

Not everything fragrant is winter-hardy here. My all time favorite fragrant plant is *Osmanthus fragrans* (Fragrant Tea Olive), grown as a houseplant in this area. Raised and schooled a Yankee, I first experienced this evergreen, holly-like tree in an estate garden in New Orleans. The flowers are insignificant, but the fragrance of that tree filled the air for blocks. My plant spends the summer on a shaded deck, and in the fall it is brought inside to live in a bright window. It literally flowers for me from fall through spring. The fragrance is ephemeral, it seems to appear briefly in the morning and evening, just a whiff here and there. Perhaps if the house were a bit more humid, the scent would linger. (Usually only available in late summer or fall.)

I'm sure I have omitted some of your favorite plants. This is because my computer does not have smellcheck. If you have a particular favorite species or variety ("this is the most fragrant peony I have ever grown," or "you forgot wisteria, you dolt"), send me a card a Beltsville or send an e-mail to behnkes@ari.net. We'll compile a list and print a brochure or put a page on our website with your recommendations. ☺



Lily of the  
Valley



## Meet: Reada Robinson



Reada was born in Florence, South Carolina, and grew up in Prince George's County, the fifth child in a family of eight. Every summer she and her siblings returned to South Carolina to help her grandparents work their tobacco, cotton and vegetable farm. That is where she learned many lessons of life, and discovered how much she enjoyed the smell and touch of the soil.

Reada came to Behnke's as a customer, wanting to transform her existing English garden to a Japanese-style garden, and it wasn't long before she joined us as a seasonal employee in the spring of 1995. She enjoyed having a job that not only financially supported her garden projects, but also provided a beautiful work environment, increased her plant knowledge and offered a great discount as well! In a very short period she was promoted to a full-time position as a floor supervisor. Advancing quickly through the Customer Service Department, she now is Sales Support Manager at the Beltsville store.

Reada specializes in theme gardening, and she has a deep love for collecting gardening books that expand her knowledge and reflect her ideas. Her other interests include cooking, and home and fashion designing.

She says "Working around so many beautiful plants increases the blessings that have been bestowed upon me. Thanks to Behnke's Career Development Program, I have obtained my CPH license and have been trained as an IPM Specialist. ☺

## My First Hostas

— by Randy Best, Perennial Plant Specialist

There's a place in the heart where special 'firsts' reside. A first love, a first kiss...and with me, a first hosta. More than twenty years ago a very special friend gave me divisions of what he called an 'August lily'. I tended them with loving care for many years, then one day I decided that I needed more of them. I went down to my favorite garden center (which just happened to be Behnke's) to find out what this plant actually was. I was told that it was *Hosta plantaginea*. There were many other varieties in stock at the time so I proceeded to pick out some new ones to use in my garden, including 'Halcyon', 'Fortunia', 'Albo picta', and a few others. But when they came into bloom I was very disappointed that the lovely fragrance which I had so come to love in the old August lilies was completely absent. I went back to the professionals at Behnke's and was given an education in hostas. I learned that only certain varieties have fragrant flowers. So I became a gardener with a quest....the quest to acquire as many fragrant varieties of hosta as possible.

My first acquisition was *Hosta* 'Royal Standard,' and, by golly, it did have sweetly scented white flowers and a pale green shiny foliage. But it was not enough, I had to have MORE! The vigorous 'Honeybells' was next, and lo and behold, the flowers were not white but pale lavender! Now I really wanted MORE. I was becoming a gardener with an obsession. I even went so far as to get a job at Behnke's to pay for the obsession (and I learned about Behnke's generous employee discount, which really helped)! Next was 'So Sweet', with beautiful glossy foliage edged in creamy white. Then I discovered a sport of 'Honey Bells'— 'Sugar and Cream'— which had the same incredible vigor as its parent and the added plus of beautiful white leaf margins. Next to join the ever increasing

fragrant family was a hosta whose name says it all: 'Fragrant Bouquet'— apple-green foliage edged in yellow, which fades to white as the season progresses, and near-white flowers with lavender undertones.

Next was 'Guacamole', a 'Fragrant Bouquet' sport. Its leaf centers are glossy, chartreuse-gold, edged with deep green. It has the same outstanding flower attributes as 'Fragrant Bouquet'. 'Hoosier Harmony' (named by its fans in the Indiana Hosta Club) is a sport of 'Royal Standard' with a bright gold-to-chartreuse green center depending upon the amount of sun it receives. Its fragrance always reminds me of my grandmother's gardenias.

Hosta fragrance peaks at dusk and continues through the evening. 'Moonlight Sonata', my most recent acquisition, lives up to its name with almost round, bluish-green leaves which change to glossy green in mid-to-late summer. It also produces large, fragrant, near-white flowers earlier than other fragrant varieties, usually starting in early to mid-July.

Each year, Behnke's receives the latest catalogs from hosta growers. When ordering, my quest for those fragrant varieties is never far from my mind, for in the dog days of August nothing is better than sitting on the veranda, sipping iced tea on a still summer's night, immersed in the exotic aroma of fragrant hostas in bloom. It always brings my mind back to that first kiss, first love....the next hosta. ☺

*Editor's note: Randy is one of our most experienced plantsmen, specializing in seasonal plants and, of course, hostas of every color and imaginable form.*





# Some Like it Hot — Planting

The past three summers have been drought summers, so I'm writing a bit about things that can sail through a drought. (Of course, this could be the year of the Great Floods—crystal balls-r-not us...)

You need to know in advance that even drought-resistant plants need a bit of attention when you plant them. Generally, you have to amend the soil and water regularly — at least for the first couple of months (or the first months of summer, depending on the plant and the amount of rainfall). Once they are established, however, they can be relied upon to come through drought conditions fairly well.

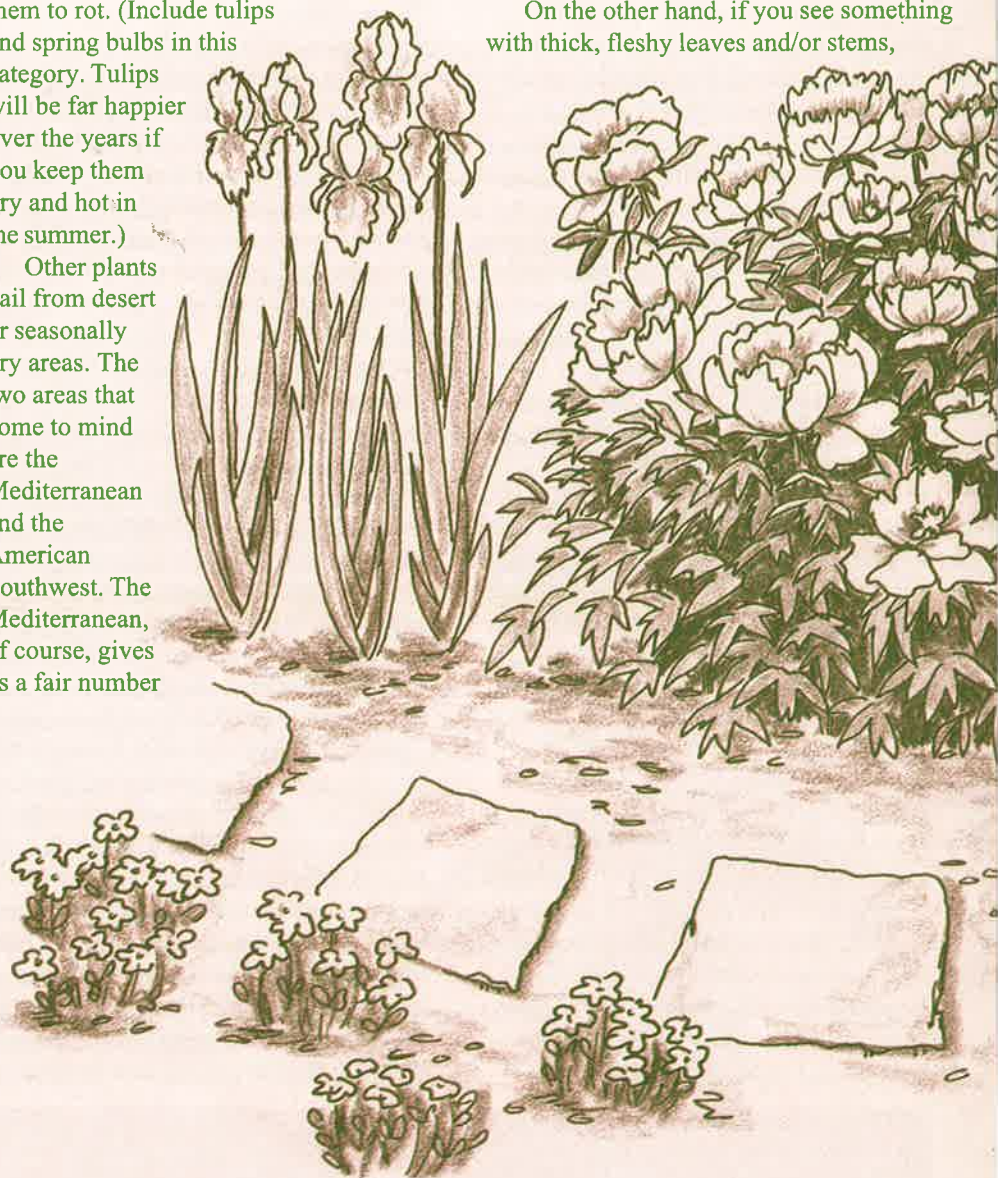
Some plants get through the summer by going dormant. (Yes, I know it's cheating.) Oriental poppies, for example, will bloom in late May and then croak for the summer. Leave them strictly alone and interplant them with annuals, or even better, things like hardy hibiscus, which don't even break dormancy until late May or early June and will provide a good, long-term show of color in the red/pink/white family. Your poppies will magically reappear in September and stay green through the fall and most of the winter. Most of the hardy cyclamen, which are wonderful for dry shade, especially under deciduous trees, will vanish in May, only to sprout their dark green, marbled leaves in September and remain through the winter. Several kinds are common and do well for us. My own favorite is *C. hederifolium*, (which means, "having ivy-like leaves"; "hedera" is ivy and "foli" is leaf in Latin). It will give you pink-lavender blooms in September-October. *Cyclamen coum* is also good, if you can get it; this will bloom lavender-pink-white through the late fall and, in a protected location, through the winter. Its leaves are more kidney-shaped. Another good summer-dormant plant is *Arum italicum*, the Italian arum. (See how easy Latin is?) It has arrow-shaped leaves veined with white, about a foot tall, which come up in the fall and remain through the winter. It

will flower in May, looking like a green-white indecision between a jack-in-the-pulpit and a calla lily. Then it will go dormant bit by bit. When it sets seed, the seed clusters are bright orange and make a good conversation piece. They also make lots of little Italian arums, so *do* plant them. These like full sun. Put them where you aren't going to shovel snow on top of them and beat them down. Generally speaking, water is useless when these plants are dormant and can actually cause them to rot. (Include tulips and spring bulbs in this category. Tulips will be far happier over the years if you keep them dry and hot in the summer.)

Other plants hail from desert or seasonally dry areas. The two areas that come to mind are the Mediterranean and the American Southwest. The Mediterranean, of course, gives us a fair number

of our culinary/fragrant herbs. The key here is that if something has small leaves and wiry stems, you can most often assume that it is used to a dry season. This includes thymes, oreganos, lavenders, santolina, and some things like artemisias. *Nepetas*, although not quite fitting this description, also will take a lot of abuse. A good shrub in this category is broom. This has long, almost leafless bunches of erect green twigs, and small "pea" flowers in yellow, pink-lavender, or yellow-orange.

On the other hand, if you see something with thick, fleshy leaves and/or stems,





# a Garden to Endure a Drought

you can often safely assume that this plant is in the business of storing water for hard times. Succulents — sedums and sempervivums — fall in this category. So do portulacas, which are excellent, ground-hugging annuals requiring little care or water, and thus able to creep over problem areas that you can't or don't want to keep watered. (Things with fleshy stems that *won't* withstand drought: impatiens, begonias and touch-me-nots...)

For more "normal" plants for drought, look for things with a long taproot. Things like baptisia, which will give you blue/

purple/white lupine-like blooms in late spring, or dictamnus, which will give you pink-white blooms and a lemon fragrance, send their roots down to China and laugh at a surface drought. Of course, this also means it's very hard to move an established plant. Other plants, like peonies and daylilies, have swollen water storage areas in their roots. While they are not drought-proof, they are a lot tougher than you would think. Last year was the first in my life that I had to water my peonies, and I expect not to have to do so again for the rest of my lifetime. Bearded iris, with their thick rhizomes, and Aril bred iris, which prefer a dry summer, also have a good tolerance for abuse.

Other things, like perovskia (Russian sage) will sail through drought easily and bloom in the late summer with airy sprays of blue-purple flowers on white-dusted foliage. I despise the stuff for its smell when rubbed — sort of like a hybrid of turpentine and kitty litter—but

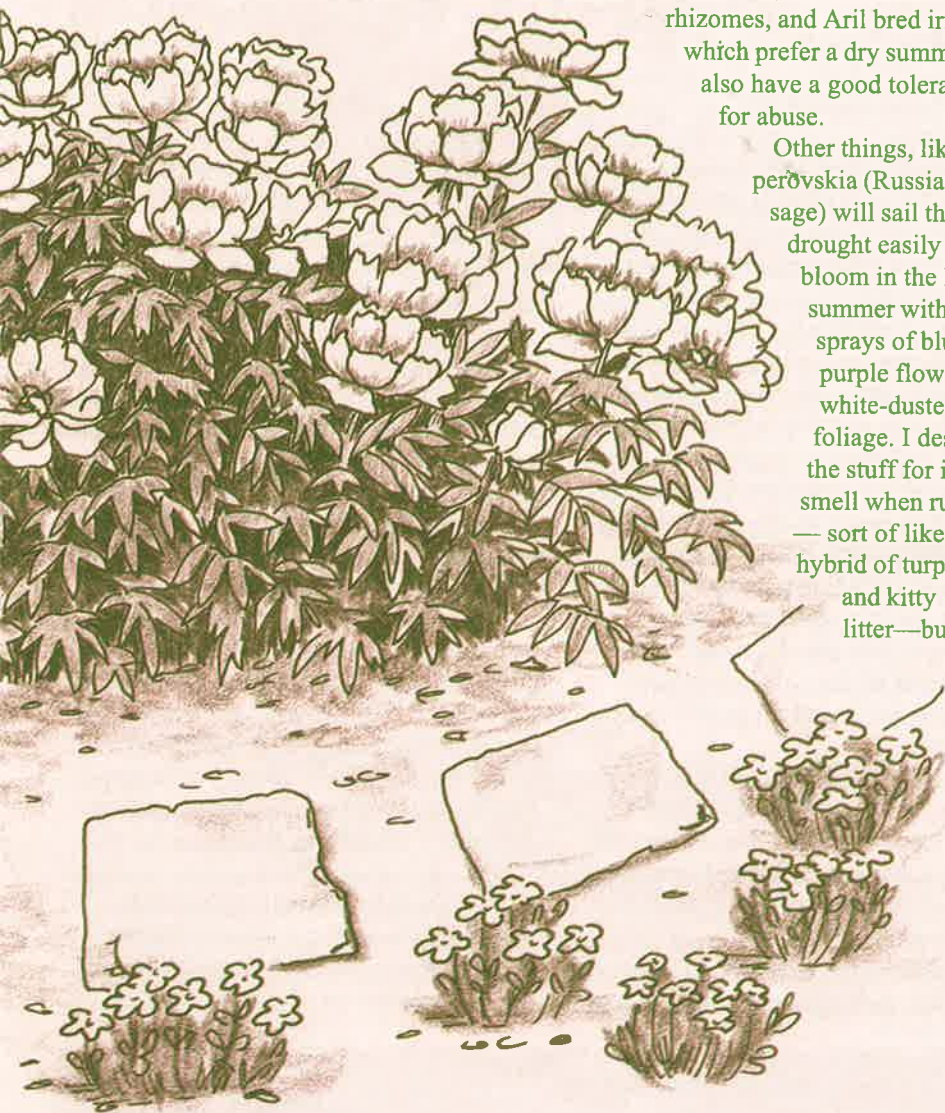
there's no denying that it looks good and drought doesn't faze it. Also in this category is caryopteris — with whorls of deep blue blooms on white-dusted foliage (with an odor which is sort of a hybrid of turpentine and rosemary — *that* smell, I love.) And nothing harms it. It has the endearing quality of coming up from seed where you least expect it, which to me means doing a hopscotch down several of my garden paths until the seedlings are big enough to move. Once established, they take *no* care, except for cutting down to almost nothing each spring, so they don't get too floppy. Both of these plants are good for a steep bank or coming up between the stones of a wall, caryopteris in particular.

Speaking of steep banks...lavender is also good for a bank, and will tolerate a fair amount of drought when established (*not* the first year!!!). It likes very good drainage, and an inordinately limey soil. You can supply both by digging in and mulching with crushed oyster shell chicken grit. As of this writing, Behnke's doesn't carry it, nor do most other garden shops. Look for this at Southern States, or a farm supply or feed store. It is relatively cheap, long lasting in its effects, and bleaches out to near white, so it looks good on top of the ground. Any excess can be placed around or under your lilacs, your buddleias, or any dianthus (pinks, carnations, sweet William), which all revel in lime. In quantity, it makes fantastic paths, which tend to "glow" glimmering white at twilight or in the lamp-lit nights of our Metro area when sprinkled atop a walkway.

Of course, this could be the year that the drought breaks. It does not hurt, therefore, to plant any of the above with a bit of gravel or crushed granite grit or sand to improve drainage, or at least to make sure they're where water will not stand.

And if worst comes to worst, we have a good selection of water lilies. ☺

— Jim Dronenburg, Perennial Plant Specialist





## The Circlehoe Weed This:

— by Bill Mann, Garden Shop Buyer

The *Henningsen circlehoe* is a new tool that received rave reviews when it was introduced in England at the Hampton Court Flower Show in 1999. Its unique circular design is especially effective for both weeding around established plants, and for cultivating and aerating the soil. The difference is in the design—the head of the *circlehoe* is an open circle of forged carbon steel and only the bottom inner lip of the circle is sharpened. This design lets you work safely between plants that are close together, and virtually eliminates damage to a plant's roots because the curved blade always cuts away from the base of the plant. You can use it between leafy plants to eliminate weeds and cultivate the soil lightly to create a natural mulch that discourages weeds and helps to conserve soil moisture. It is extremely comfortable to use and its small head design makes it easy to maneuver.

The *circlehoe* is perfect for rose gardens and perennial borders. It works well in the clay soil of many Washington area gardens, due to the sharp leading edge of the blade. It's safe to use around irrigation systems—no cutting or pulling up of hoses. It reduces the need for chemical weed killers because it cuts weeding time in half.

The *circlehoe* is available in a variety of sizes and lengths to suit many garden needs, from hand-held models to 65" tall models. It is an ideal tool for older or physically-challenged gardeners. The blade is small, but tough and lightweight. It's easy to handle, even on the biggest weeds. When needed, the *circlehoe* can quickly and easily be sharpened with a chainsaw file.

The *circle hoe* was named by *Consumer Reports* as one of the best buy gifts for Christmas 1999. "In the tight quarters of an established garden, the *Henningsen circlehoe* earned high praise from our testers. The working end is small, but it can slice through even sizable weeds." ❧

## Filling Your Days with Flowers

— by Amy Murray, Sales Specialist, Florist Division

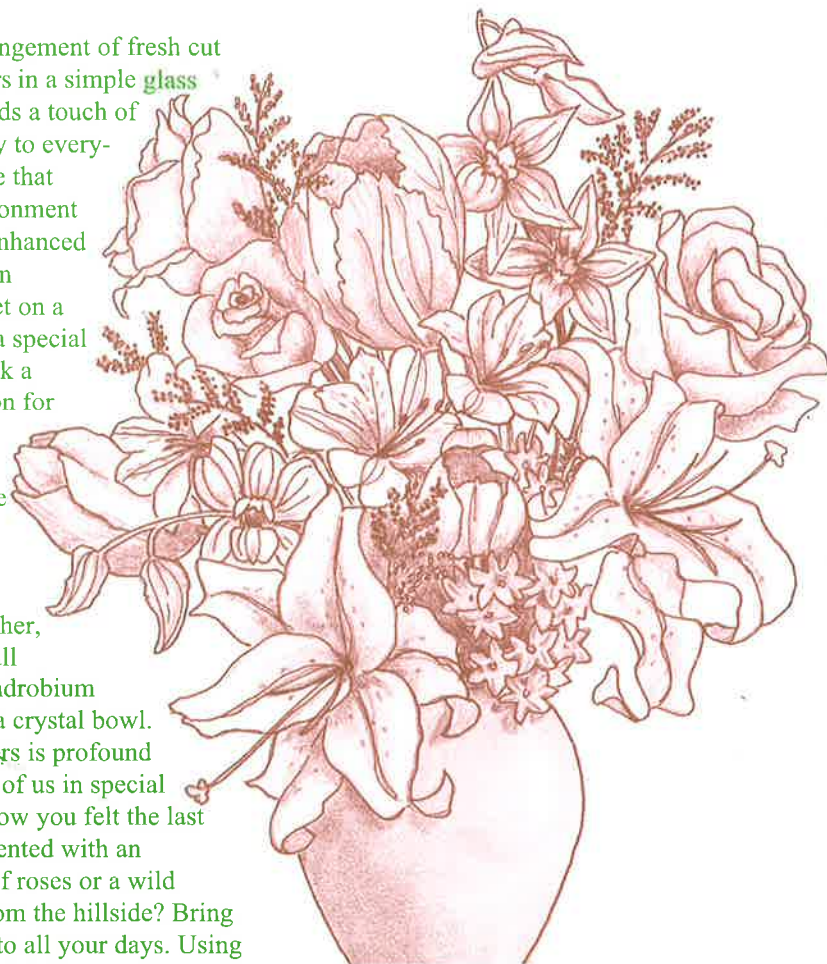
An arrangement of fresh cut flowers in a simple glass vase adds a touch of elegance and beauty to every-day life. We believe that every home's environment can be noticeably enhanced by the addition of an inexpensive bouquet on a weekly basis, and a special arrangement to mark a momentous occasion for the home's family.

Think of all the places in your home that would benefit from a bunch of daisies in your Grandmother's pitcher, sweet peas in a small vase, or elegant dendrobium orchids floating in a crystal bowl. The magic of flowers is profound and can touch each of us in special ways. Remember how you felt the last time you were presented with an exquisite bouquet of roses or a wild daffodil plucked from the hillside? Bring that light feeling into all your days. Using flowers as an essential element of everyday life will enable you to bring the simple beauty of outdoors into every corner of your home. Buying flowers for yourself or someone else is one of those emotionally-charged, highly fulfilling moments we rarely have in our action-packed days.

When choosing blooms, keep in mind where they will be placed. Is the room formal or casual? Are you having a sit-down dinner for 10 or grilling with the kids on the deck?

Probably the first impression you have of any flower is its color, which often evokes a mood or season. Observing color combinations in nature may help you when you are selecting flowers to fill the rooms of your home.

The flowers you choose for your entrance hall or fireplace mantle may be



larger and more lavish than the centerpiece you place on the dining room table. Remember that flowers on the table should not exceed 15 inches in height so your guests may converse with ease. Fragrant blooms, such as oriental lilies, stock, and peonies may overpower your dinner table, but by all means use that heady fragrance on your bedside tables or bathroom vanities.

Choosing the perfect bouquet for your dinner table or mantle allows you to pause long enough to take a deep breath and serves as a reminder of the beauty found in nature.

The key is to find out which flowers have special meaning for you. When in doubt, however, feel free to ask the experts at Behnke Florist to assist you. ❧





# Herbs at the Kitchen Door

— by Melodie Likel, Perennial Specialist

*F*resh, fragrant herbs enhance foods in most wonderful ways.

A sprig of fresh mint in a cool glass of iced tea, a julienne of fresh basil with sliced ripe tomatoes, or a sprinkling of chives on a baked potato enlivens the food it decorates. With a little planning you can step outside the kitchen door and be on your way to turning everyday meals into a celebration of good living.

Look out the door nearest the kitchen and decide where a herb garden would best fit. Is there already a planting bed there? If so, and if the bed gets at least 3-4 hours of sun in the middle of the day, the transition to herb garden is simple. Keep in mind that herbs are not only tasty but are also beautiful as garden plants and can be artfully combined with perennials and annuals to provide flavor and flowers. The flowers you choose for the herb garden can find their way to the dinner table as well.

Violas, nasturtiums, marigolds, lavender and calendula are some of the edible flowers that will brighten the herb border. Combine them with a frilly edging of curly parsley that can be snipped repeatedly for dinner without looking sparse. One bushy sage plant, one rosemary, a clump of chives, a few plants of parsley and 1 or 2 basil plants make a basic herb patch and take up surprisingly little space. Add creeping herbs such as thyme and oregano along walkways where you can enjoy their spicy scents and easily harvest them for the kitchen. Sink a large pot in the ground and plant it with mint. The pot will prevent the plant from spreading and you'll have mint for cool, summer drinks. Feathery fennel, towering, celery-like lovage, fruity-scented

pineapple sage and refreshing lemon

verbena add vertical dimension to the herb garden with delicious results. Tender lemon grass grows to 3 feet tall and adds a tropical flavor to the garden and a lemony zest to food.


To plant in an established bed work a layer 1 to 2 inches thick of decomposed, organic matter, plus a good sprinkling of pulverized limestone, into the soil 6 to 8 inches deep. This will improve the soil and bring the pH into the range that most herbs prefer. To establish a bed in an undisturbed area, first kill any existing vegetation with herbicide or by turning the soil, waiting two weeks, and then turning again. Incorporate organic matter as above. If drainage is a problem add pea gravel and mix thoroughly into the planting depth.

If your kitchen looks out onto a sunny deck or patio, a container garden can provide all the herbs you need. Select a variety of attractive containers (with drainage holes), large ones for rosemary and sage, medium for basil and parsley and shallow ones for oregano and thyme. Don't overlook the potential of hanging baskets and window boxes

when planning. Combine herbs and flowers in large containers to make pleasing mini-gardens. Plant thyme at the foot of a large rosemary. Both herbs originate in the arid region around the Mediterranean and are drought-tolerant. Bay laurel, tender in our region, is one of the basic flavoring herbs in soup and stews. Keep one in a sunny kitchen window during the winter and move it outside in late spring.

Harvest your herbs by pinching out the top 2 to 3 inches of the growing stems. This will encourage the plants to grow and become thicker by branching. One basil plant pinched regularly will grow into a mini-tree of fragrant foliage.

To cut down on washing time, hose the herbs to be

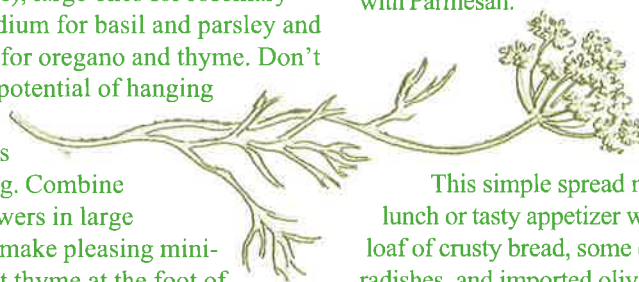
harvested for dinner with a fairly stiff spray of water in the morning. During the day the herbs dry and at cooking time they will need only to be picked and added to the dish. 

## PASTA WITH A HANDFUL OF HERBS

A delicious way to use the abundance of herbs in the summer garden! Have everything ready to quickly toss together and enjoy.

- 3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 3 tablespoons butter
- 2-4 cloves garlic, peeled and chopped
- 1 cup dry bread crumbs
- Chopped herbs (Such as basil, Italian parsley, oregano, rosemary and mint.)
- 1 pound spaghetti or linguini
- 1/2 - 3/4 cup freshly grated Parmesan

Saute garlic in olive oil until just colored. Set garlic aside. Add butter to oil. Add bread-crumbs. Stir until just golden. Set aside. Wash, dry and finely chop herbs. Cook pasta until al dente. Drain, reserving one cup of the cooking water. Toss pasta with garlic, bread crumbs and herbs. Add a little more olive oil and pasta water as needed to moisten. Toss with Parmesan.



WHITE BEAN &  
ROSEMARY  
SPREAD

This simple spread makes a delicious lunch or tasty appetizer when served with a loaf of crusty bread, some cherry tomatoes, radishes, and imported olives. Or, fill a ripe tomato on a bed of salad greens. Makes about 2 cups.

- 2 cups cooked white beans or a 15-ounce can of beans, rinsed and drained
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 teaspoons balsamic vinegar
- 2 cloves minced garlic
- 1 tablespoon fresh minced rosemary
- 1/3 cup finely chopped celery
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper
- Few pinches fresh red pepper flakes

Put all of the beans in a bowl, and mash about half of them with a fork. Add the olive oil, vinegar, garlic, rosemary, and celery and toss well. Season with salt, pepper, and red pepper flakes, if desired.

Let stand, covered, for about 30 minutes before serving. Taste for seasoning. If refrigerated, allow to come to cool room temperature before serving.

©Susan Belsinger, January 2000



## Pest Alert: Fire Ants

— by Larry Hurley, Perennial Plant Specialist

The Maryland Department of Agriculture reports that they have found several isolated infestations of this ant in Maryland since 1988. Anyone who suspects that they have a fire ant mound is requested to call 410-841-5920 (Annapolis). MDA wants to make sure that this serious pest does not become established in our state. So far this has not happened because the range of fire ants is limited by cold winters. However, they are slowly moving north and have been found to survive cold weather in Maryland in sheltered areas.

This sleek little import from South America is familiar to anyone who lives in the South. The ants themselves are small and reddish, from 1/8th to 1/4th of an inch in length. The nests are built underground, but they also make a large, sandy mound at the surface. The mounds may be up to 10 to 12 inches in diameter and 8 to 10 inches high.

Fire ants are easily agitated, move fast, and sting. When the mound is disturbed (by say, a lawn mower), hundreds of angry ants swarm to the surface virtually immediately, and attack the disturber. Stings result in small "itchy" welts, usually with a blister. Multiple stings or stings inflicted upon allergic individuals can be serious or even fatal.

If you see a mound like this, especially in a recently landscaped area, report it to the above number. Maryland infestations have invariably resulted from ants arriving on landscape plants brought to Maryland from the southern United States.

For more information on fire ants, you might start at <http://www.fireant.tamu.edu>, an internet website at Texas A&M University. 

## Summer Gardening Events at our Beltsville Location

For more information, pick up a Summer Bulletin at any Behnke location, or visit our website: [www.behnke.com](http://www.behnke.com).

### Container Gardening Days

Friday and Saturday, June 2 & 3

Design successful gardens in containers!

Purchase a container and plants, we'll provide the soil and planting, free of charge on these two days only!

### Aquatic Gardening Demonstration

Saturday and Sunday, June 24 & 25

Our experts share information about aquatic gardening, including the installation of a water feature, landscaping around a pond, and choosing aquatic plants.

### Herb Workshop: Herbal Soaps

Saturday, July 15

\$30 (Reservation required)

### Workshop: Herbal Balms & Face Creams

Saturday, August 5

\$30 (Reservation required)

### Lawn Care Weekend

Saturday, August 19

### Tomato Taste-Off!

Saturday, August 26

Our signature summer event!



Do Not Forward or Return — Address Cor.

Florist 301-937-4032

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Beltsville, MD

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