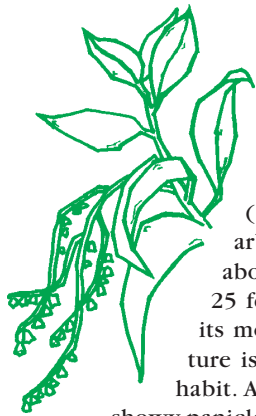


## Tree Profile: The Sourwood



This handsome tree brings to coastal gardens a reliable show of striking orange-red fall colour.

The sourwood (*Oxydendrum arboreum*) grows to about 35 feet high and 25 feet wide. Perhaps its most interesting feature is its late flowering habit. A great many long,

showy panicles of white flowers are produced from late summer into fall. It is the only tree we are aware of that flowers at the same time as it changes into its eye-catching fall display, and the white flowers really stand out against the colourful foliage. Plant in sun or part-shade, in moist, well-drained acid soil. It is a Rhododendron cousin and could be planted in a rhodo bed, or with Azaleas or Camellias.

## Nursery News

- **Our fall hours:** open daily from 9-5 except holidays. We'll be open until Christmas for **Christmas trees and Wreaths**. Please note we will be closed for Thanksgiving Day and Remembrance Day.
- This will be the **last issue of "Gardening News" for the year**, though we'll still have another email bulletin in November on maintenance tips, and it will also have the schedule for the **Wreath Making classes**. If we don't have your current email address, please let us know how to contact you by sending a quick note to [russellnursery@telus.net](mailto:russellnursery@telus.net)
- **Bulbs are in now.** Lots of new varieties this year. Plant now for explosions of spring colour.
- **We are eager to get our plant pots back.** We are pleased to take the one gallon size black pots and bigger, and are especially grateful for the larger size containers.
- **Questions, comments, suggestions, feedback?** We'd love to hear from you. Our address is: Russell Nursery, 1370 Wain Rd. North Saanich, BC V8L 5V1 or our phone number is 656-0384 or we can be reached by email at [russellnursery@telus.net](mailto:russellnursery@telus.net)

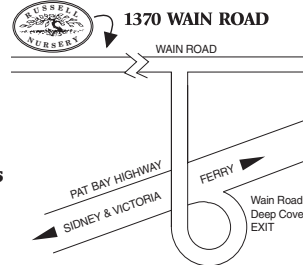
## Russell Nursery in North Saanich

- Trees • Shrubs • Perennials • Pottery
- Seasonal Annuals and Herbs

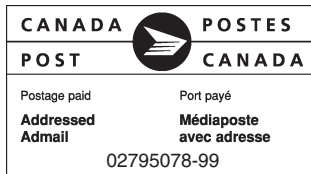
**Unusual and hard-to-find plants along with all the old favourites for your garden. Specializing in trees, shrubs and perennials. Wide Selection of Japanese Maples.**

1370 Wain Road, North Saanich – Phone 656-0384

Regular hours open daily 9-5:00 except some holidays



Russell Nursery  
1370 Wain Road  
North Saanich, BC V8L 5V1



# Fall 2004 GARDENING NEWS

## Gardening Class Schedule

Russell Nursery is pleased to offer another round of gardening seminars in October and November. The classes are free except for the fall pruning workshops. The classes last about an hour. Class size is limited: **please call to reserve a space at 656-0384**. The nursery is located at **1370 Wain Rd. in North Saanich**. Limit of two classes per person.

**Basic Garden Design** - with Alison Sproule. Saturday, 2nd October at 10:00 a.m.

**Colour & Care for the Fall and Winter Perennial Border** - with Ingrid Wood. Saturday, 16th October at 10:00 a.m.

**Tool Sharpening Clinic** - with our nursery staff. Saturday, 23rd October at 10:00 a.m.

**Pruning Japanese Maples** - with Brian Russell. Sunday, 31st October or 7th November at 10:00 a.m.

**Dormant Season Pruning of Trees and Shrubs** - The fall pruning workshops are taught in small groups by professional Arborists. There will be a \$10.00 fee per person to help defray costs. Enrolment is limited. The same class is given on three different Saturdays: October 30th, November 6th or 13th at 10:00 a.m. or at 12:00 noon.

## Bulbs on Parade

by Lynne Irons & Susan Tice



Spring bulbs are wonderful things, in part because they are so versatile. They can be planted in colourful swaths or tucked into tiny pockets like jewels. They can be grown in containers, alone or with other plants. They can be treated as annuals or perennials, grown outdoors or in. They can grow in sun or

shade and their range of colours makes any scheme possible from soft and subtle to outrageous.

To anyone moving here from colder parts of the country, one of the marvels of Spring on the coast is the slow unfolding of the season and the glorious colours of the bulbs that come in waves, one after the other. January brings the snowdrops, followed closely by the cheery yellow faces of the aconites. Multi-hued carpets of crocus, blue scilla and dwarf iris brighten up grey February days. March and April are highlighted by hyacinths, anemones, early tulips and multitudes of daffodils. In May the later flowering tulips continue the show, along with fritillarias and the vividly coloured DeCaen anemones. The dramatic drumstick heads of alliums make their appearance in May and continue into June.

The downside of all the glory is all that messy, dying foliage. Bulbs need that foliage to store

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**Russell Nursery in North Saanich**

1370 Wain Road, N. Saanich 656-0384  
Regular hours – open daily, 9-5

energy for the next year's show, but it can be a pain to deal with. Foliage of smaller bulbs disappears quickly and can be hidden by groundcovers or the emerging leaves of plants such as hostas (surely made to cover bulb foliage) or grasses. In the same way, peonies pair well with tulips to hide the bulbs' dying leaves. Later, larger bulbs can be tucked into pockets in the perennial garden which look invitingly empty when the fall cleanup is completed. Even low growing varieties can be seen at the back of a dormant perennial border. One word of caution: most bulbs like to be on the dry side in the summer, and are better when paired with plants that like dryish conditions.

Many bulbs naturalise well and can be planted under trees or shrubs. Fritillaria, muscari, scilla and narcissus will all be quite happy in part shade. Don't forget the lawn either. The small early flowering varieties such as snowdrops, aconites, scilla and crocus will all have finished flowering before the person in charge of mowing the lawn has a chance to get too anxious about the "off limits" areas.

Areas in the garden usually dedicated to annuals are good spots for bulbs, but then there is all that foliage again. One trick is to plant the bulbs in plastic pots and then plant the pots. Put compost and sand on the bottom of the pot and plant about 5 tulip bulbs to a one gallon pot, 8 or 9 to a two gallon pot, fill with soil and sink the entire pot into the ground. The whole pot can then be moved once flowering is over, leaving a hole to be filled with something for summer colour.

Use the same trick if you're planting bulbs in a pot or container, especially one that is changed seasonally. Larger 3 or 5 gallon pots can be planted for mass effect or small 4"

pots can be planted with little bulbs like mini daffodils, to be nestled into a container of mixed winter plants. Or, if all that seems like too much trouble, just think of the bulbs as annuals to be replaced each year - there's always something new to try.

Bulb combinations, or bulbs in combination with other plants, provide wonderful opportunities to let your creative side run wild and can be done on any scale. Imagine a pot of yellow Monte Carlo tulips mixed with blue Muscari on a patio; or Tete a Tete daffodils peeking through bright green Baby's Tears somewhere near the path; or pink-edged white Shirley and dark purple Queen of the Night tulips emerging above a froth of pink and blue forget-me-nots; the possibilities are endless! We have assembled some photos and bulb combination ideas that you are welcome to consult the next time you're at the nursery. Please ask to see the bulb binder.

Some of the new bulb varieties available this year.

**Narcissus 'Avalon'** - yellow petals with a white halo and white cup (16"); **Narcissus 'Sweet Harmony'** - white petals, large white cup edged with lemon yellow (16"); **Tulipa 'Sweet Love'** - 2004 Tulip of the Year, creamy pink with a purple flame (12"); **Tulipa 'Boccherini'** - iridescent purple with rose coloured flame (20"); **Tulipa 'Cum Laude'** - velvety purple (24"); **Tulipa 'Gavota'** - 2003 Tulip of the Year, deep burgundy, cream edge turning golden yellow (18"); **Tulipa 'Praestans Unicum'** - reddish-orange with variegated foliage (10"); **Tulipa 'Veronique Sanson'** - deep orange with lighter edges (16").

## Sharpen Your Shovels, it's Time to Transplant!

- by Brian Russell

We are asked almost every day when the best time is to move plants around the garden, and how best to do it. Woody plants (trees, shrubs and conifers) are best moved when they are fully dormant. In our climate, this means November, December, January or early February.

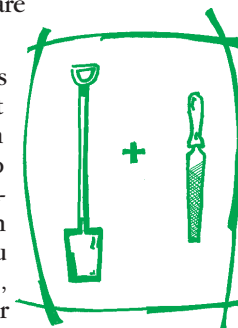
Before you start digging, protect wide spreading branches, and make it easier to get at the plant's base, by tying the plant so that the branches are held tighter toward the center. You can use rope or twine as long as it is reasonably soft and won't damage the bark. Almost any large shrub or small tree will be easier to dig and maneuver into its new home if the branches are wrapped.

Next, ensure that your spade has a sharp edge. Use a coarse flat file to hone a nice sharp edge on your spade. If you have access to a bench grinder, it can hasten matters considerably. If you plan on doing a lot of transplanting you might want to keep one nice, sharp, clean garden spade just for transplanting. The ones with a square edge and a short sturdy handle with a "D" shaped grip are best. A sharp shovel is important because you need to sever the roots cleanly. A dull edge will leave a lot of damaged, torn roots, making it much harder for the plant to re-root.

Clear away all the leaves and debris around the base of the plant and then start slicing your way through the roots, angling inwards as much as downwards. You should be digging at an angle so that you will end up with a cone-shaped root ball. The rule of thumb for determining the size of the root ball to dig is as follows: allow ten to twelve inches of root ball diameter for every one inch of trunk caliper. For small plants, you might be able to dig a nice root ball out with just six or eight "slices" of your razor sharp shovel blade. For larger plants, you will need a

larger root ball but the shovel's blade won't be long enough to get all the way under the plant the first time around. First, dig a full shovel depth all the way around the plant and then get a helper to use another shovel as a lever to lift, very slightly, the partially severed root ball so that you can get in and slice the remaining roots. At this point it's not usually possible to use your foot on the shovel anymore because it's so deep in the soil. Just push it in by hand and slice through the rest of the roots until the plant is ready to lift.

Protect the root ball by lifting it carefully onto a tarp and dragging the tarp to the plant's new home. Ideally it should be replanted as soon as possible to minimize transplant shock. If you can't plant it right away then you should wrap up the root ball entirely with burlap (or an old towel or part of a bedsheet) and secure it tightly with twine. Treated like this, it can be heeled into a holding bed and kept there for weeks or even months before it is planted out again.



When replanting, ensure that you are planting at exactly the same depth: no higher or lower than the original location. Add bonemeal to the back fill soil to stimulate new root growth, water in well to dislodge air pockets, untie the poor thing and prune off the broken branches (there will surely be some). A significant portion of that plant's roots stayed at its former location, and the roots that remain will need to receive more moisture than usual, with mid to late summer being the most critical time. You won't really know if the plant has survived the transplant process for at least a full year. Treat it like a new planting and pamper it a bit more than usual. Mulching will help, and so will building a little soil 'donut' or basin around the plant where you can put your hose on "trickle" three times a week.

Did you know that fall is the best time to plant a tree? A newly planted tree will continue rooting out into the warm, moist soil, and will be well on its way to getting established by spring. We grow a wide array of beautiful shade and ornamental trees, and all of them are ready to leave home now. We invite you to wander through our tree lines sometime soon. This is when we have our best selection of trees for the year.