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Nursery News June 2017

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What's Old is New Again

Like so many other things, plants come in and go out of fashion. Dahlias and roses both fall into this category. The last couple of years we've noticed a renewed interest in both, and for good reason. They give us a lot of pleasure, with minimal effort, over a long season.



Dahlia 'Chat Noir'

Dahlias are for collectors and casual growers alike.

Their range of colour and form is endlessly fascinating. Our dahlias are mostly in 2 and 3 gallon pots and are growing strongly, many have buds. The [Dahlia Variety List](#) is on our website, but changes quickly. Best to call or come in to confirm availability.

Modern roses bear little resemblance to their fussy ancestors.

New introductions are bred for superior disease resistance, continuous or repeat bloom and good fragrance.

We are currently working on next year's orders, so now's the time for special requests. We buy from **Weeks Roses, David Austin and Pan American**. Weeks Roses celebrates 80 years in business next year and will be marking the occasion with some exciting new introductions. A sneak peak:





25th Anniversary Speaker Series

Beautiful Sea Cider Farm and Ciderhouse, right here on the Peninsula, was the setting for the fourth talk in our series.

Douglas Justice, Curator of Collections and Head of Horticulture at UBC Botanical Garden was full of information on his favourite small trees for residential gardens. Top of the list are **Japanese Maples**, **Stewartias**, and **Styrax**, and we couldn't agree more! In an entertaining presentation, he described the positive qualities of these trees and the best ways to keep them healthy. He also pointed out that some shrubs can be grown into small trees, and showed a *Cotinus coggygria*, an *Arbutus unedo*, and a lovely little Larch. *(We have all these special trees and shrubs in stock, the styrax are in bloom and looking great. Come on out and have a look!)*



Everyone enjoyed the delicious cider and snacks, and the friendly, helpful staff at Sea Cider made this Summer Solstice evening an event to remember.

Save the Date Sunday, October 01

Soft Light and no Wind...Seeing and Shooting Gardens Renowned garden photographer and tour guide [Allan Mandell](#) will be showing some of his work. He will also be giving advice on how to see and photograph the beauty in our own gardens. **2:00 pm at the HCP** [Buy Tickets](#)



Gardens of the Spirit - Kyoto by Allan Mandell

Collector Alert *Hakonachloa macra* SunFlare™

Introducing a beautiful new Japanese Forest Grass that represents an important Canadian contribution to temperate gardens everywhere. **SunFlare™** has vibrant chartreuse leaves that become intense golden yellow in the sun, randomly highlighted in deep crimson. Fall colouring is a combination of chartreuse and gold saturated with tones of burnt orange and burgundy-red. This neat, strong-growing grass has a compact habit and forms an upright mound with graceful cascading foliage. *From Lyle Courtice of HarkAway Botanicals.*



We are lucky enough to have a very limited number available prior to general release. They aren't quite ready, but let us know if you would like to reserve one.

The Veggie Garden

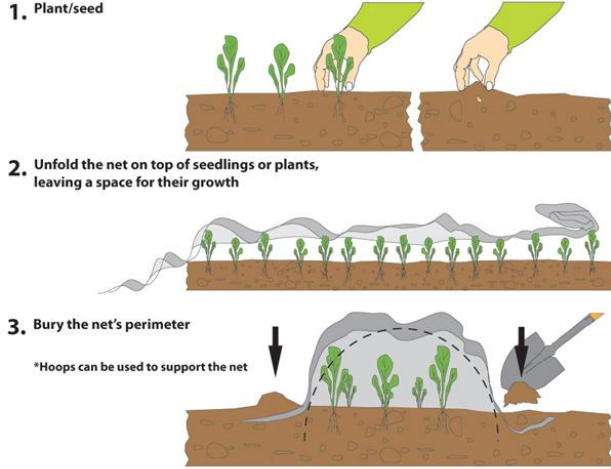
It was hard to get motivated to do much in the garden this spring. The cool rainy days were uninspiring to say the least. In general, we're about a month late but things will catch up quickly with the warm weather. It's not too late to plant tomatoes, cucumbers and peppers and we still have them available, with some in 1 and 2 gallon pots. Beans can still be planted from seed - they are true heat lovers and get going quickly.

You may not know it, but it's almost Carrot Day! Aka July 01, it's the day when those in the know get their winter carrots seeded. Anyone interested in winter vegetables should be giving them some serious thought, starting now. Check out Linda Gilkeson's handy [Planting Guide for Winter Harvests](#) for more info.

The [West Coast Seeds Planting Guide](#) is also very useful.

Top of the To Do List: Protect young plants from insect pests with

ProTekNet, a reusable netting with mesh small enough to keep out even carrot rust fly and spotted wing drosophila. It allows light and water to pass through and can stay over the plants for the entire season. It's important to pin down the edges, as the crafty critters will sneak under them if they can. Use a piece large enough to be loose and 'grow' as tall as your crop. It can be draped over hoops or other support structures. **ProTekNet** is 6 ½ feet wide, and available by the foot. **Highly recommended.**



Calling all Greenhouse Gardeners Do you have questions about how to use your greenhouse? If yes, you might find the answers on the **Salish Sea Greenhouse Gardeners** Facebook page.

The group provides a forum where greenhouse gardeners can ask questions and discuss what works and what doesn't in our local Vancouver Island environment. It's a great place to give and get advice, recommend helpful websites, share photos, and take part in the discussions.

To join the group, either log onto Facebook or sign up for an account and then search for **Salish Sea Greenhouse Gardeners**. **When you get to the group page, click on the Join button.** Once the group administrator has approved your request to join, you'll be able to ask questions, make comments, add photos, etc.

(You can limit your Facebook activity to being a member of this group if you don't otherwise want to be on Facebook.)



Fun for staff too!



Garden Club Visits

We recently welcomed the **Ladysmith Saltair Garden Club** for an introduction to the nursery and a look at some new and under-appreciated plants. It was a lot of fun for everyone. **Sue Maycock** was the lucky winner of an impromptu door prize, the brand

new **'At Last' Rose** from Proven Winners, which will be available next year.

Call us if you would like to arrange a visit for your garden club. The visit can be tailored to your members' interests.

Peonies, How to Grow & Why We Love

Them

Mature clumps of peonies have an air of old world charm about them. They invoke visions of garden parties and ladies in big hats. They have substance and a sense of permanence. Not surprising really, considering that peonies last practically forever; 50 - 100 year plants are common in old gardens.



'Bowl of Beauty'

Peonies add a lot to the garden. They come in every shade of pink imaginable, deep luscious reds, bright coral, clear white and even yellow. Many are fragrant. They are long lasting as cut flowers and can be picked in bud and held in the fridge for weeks until needed!

Peonies are deer and rabbit resistant and have handsome foliage that stays tidy all summer and turns red in the fall. They need very little care beyond an annual mulching with good compost.

Growing Tips:

- Peonies need a minimum of 6 hours of full sun a day and good air circulation.
- They need deep, rich soil. Heavy clay soils are better than sandy soils, but drainage must be good. pH should be neutral to slightly alkaline.
- **Correct planting depth is critical** and different for each type:

Regular garden peonies: The crown should be about one inch below the surface, with the red tips still showing.

Tree Peonies: Plant with the graft 4 - 6 inches below the surface

Itoh Peonies: Plant with the crown about 2 inches below the surface.

- Stake varieties with large, double flowers. Get the supports in early and let the plants grow into them.
- Avoid overhead watering if possible.
- Deadhead after flowering and cut foliage to the ground after the first frost in the fall. **Do not cut the woody stems of tree peonies or Itoh peonies.**
- Peonies rarely need to be divided and hate to be moved, but if it is necessary to do either, fall is the best time.
- In the fall, apply well-aged compost around, not on top of, the plants.
- In the spring apply a fertilizer that is higher in phosphorus and potassium than nitrogen.
- Newly planted peonies can take up to three years to bloom, depending on plant size, growing conditions and genetics - be patient!



Russell Nursery is the authorized BC distributor for **Halls English Greenhouses**, which come in a variety of sizes and models. Several are set up at the nursery. For information please visit our [website](http://www.russellnursery.com).

If you aren't sure which one is right for you, call us to arrange a free in home consultation. 250-656-0384

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