

From The Ground Up

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The Garden Pea

By: Margaret Murphy, Master Gardener

"How luscious lies the pea within the pod."
Emily Dickinson

Finally, the ground has thawed, my tulips have surfaced and I was able to get my cool-season vegetables in the garden. I planted leafy greens, carrots and beets and something new – garden peas. I am a novice pea grower. Growing up my mom always grew peas. I remember shelling them for dinner and used to get scolded for eating more peas than I put in the bowl.

The peas I planted are an early maturing variety but I fear we might have a short growing season for peas this spring. Peas like it cool and plants stop producing when the weather turns hot. Peas can be planted as soon as the soil is able to be worked but this season many gardens are running late.

Peas are a staple in many home gardens and have been widely cultivated for centuries. There are three main types of peas: garden pea, snow pea and snap pea. The garden or English pea is the traditional plant most commonly found in gardens. Pods are harvested when they are plump and the seeds are tender and sweet. The pod of garden peas is very fibrous and not

edible. Snow peas, on the other hand, have edible pods and are usually harvested when the pods are long and flat with the seeds just starting to develop. These tender pods are often used in stir-fries and salads. Snow peas are sometimes referred

to as sugar peas. Snap peas also have edible pods but are best picked when the seeds are nearly full size. Snap peas are ready to harvest when the pod will "snap" in two like a freshly-picked green bean. Mature pods can develop strings that should be removed before cooking.

You may have heard about inoculating peas with nitrogen-fixing bacteria just before planting. Peas belong to the legume family. They are able to "fix" atmospheric nitrogen into a usable form for the plant with the help of the soil-dwelling bacterium, *Rhizobium*. Your garden soil may already have adequate amounts of the bacteria. However, to increase the number of these beneficial bacteria, especially in newly planted ground, some gardeners will inoculate their peas. Pea inoculants can be purchased at garden centers and from some seed catalogs.

Pea plants are vining and benefit from some type of support that their tendrils can grip. Good garden companions for peas include carrots, turnips and radishes. Mint grown next to peas is believed to improve their health and taste. But avoid planting peas next to garlic or onion. These plants can stunt the growth of peas. If you find that your pea crop did poorly this spring or



you just want more fresh peas, you can plant a fall crop in early August. One tip to growing cool-season crops in the summer is to shade them to keep them cooler.

Vegetables offer us many good nutrients. In the case of peas, they supply us with several vitamins including A, C and a few B's. Plus they are one of the best vegetables to eat for dietary fiber. They also have a decent supply of protein, iron, zinc and potassium. Peas can be eaten cooked or raw. They are best when eaten the same day they are harvested but can be stored in a plastic bag in the refrigerator for two to three days. Peas also freeze well.

In the News

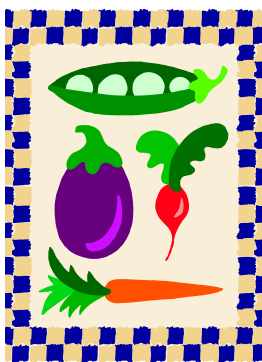
Health Benefits from Plants

Research at the Landscape and Human Health Lab at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign has shown that performing activities in green settings can reduce children's Attention Deficit-Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) symptoms.

In a nationwide survey, parents rated leisure activities--such as reading or playing sports--as improving children's symptoms more when performed in green outdoor settings than in non-green settings. A more recent study tested children with ADHD in a controlled setting after they had walked in one of three environments that differed from one another in the level of greenery: a park, a neighborhood and a quiet downtown area. The findings confirmed that the attention of children with ADHD functions better after spending time in more natural settings.

ADHD affects up to 7 percent of children. Those afflicted have chronic difficulty paying attention and focusing on tasks and can be impulsive, outburst-prone and sometimes aggressive. These behaviors often result in family conflict, peer rejection and academic failure. The current treatments of drugs and behavioral therapy do not work in all cases and in many cases offer only limited relief, said Frances Kuo, director of the Landscape and Human Health Lab.

According to Kuo, "These research findings suggest adding trees and greenery where children spend a lot of time, such as near homes and schools, and encouraging kids with ADHD to play in green spaces may help supplement established treatments to improve children's functioning." From Iowa State March 2013 newsletter, Master Gardener News & Views



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MAY 2013

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2 Purchase and plant bare root trees before bud break	3	4
5	6 Mulch newly planted trees and shrubs	7	8 Remove plant debris from ponds and water features	9	10	11
12 Mother's Day	13	14 Don't work in garden if soil is saturated	15	16 Remember to wear sunscreen before working outdoors	17 Lawn care tips	18
19	20	21 Thin seedlings to prevent over crowding	22	23 Prune spring flowering shrubs after blooming	24	25
26 Plant warm-season vegetables and flowers	27 Memorial Day	28	29	30	31 Leave foliage on bulb plants until leaves yellow and die	

The South Dakota Herb Garden

By Priscilla Jurkovich, Master Gardener

Chia *Salvia hispanica* is from the Lamiaceae (mint) family with origins in Mexico and South America. This annual herb is hardy in zones 9 through 11 so it is not grown commercially in South Dakota zone 4. Chia loves full or part sun, is drought tolerant and is resistant to most garden insects and pests. The seeds sow easily as demonstrated in their use in Chia “pets”, which grow hair-like sprouts in terracotta figurines within a week. The plant has bright green foliage up to 48 inches. At harvest, chia looks similar to spearmint with square stems and paired, opposite, textured, simple leaves with purple flowers (without the “spear” effect at the tip). These dried flowers can be harvested for the chia seed to eat.



Photo by Priscilla Jurkovich

Historically, chia was used by the Aztecs to relieve joint pain and skin conditions. The leaves and stems of the chia plant taste great in sandwiches, soups, salads and stews. The seeds contain omega 3 fatty acids, fiber, calcium, phosphorus, magnesium, manganese, copper, niacin, zinc, iron, vitamin C, lysine and many amino acids and minerals. A teaspoon of the seeds in a smoothie, cooked cereal, kombucha or fruit juice has been recommended for digestion and weight loss. The seeds can be ground into flour to enhance your baked goods. *Warning:* The seeds are very small (similar to Basil) and with the South Dakota winds, may self sow.

Spring Blooming Joy: Lilacs

By Margaret Murphy, Master Gardener

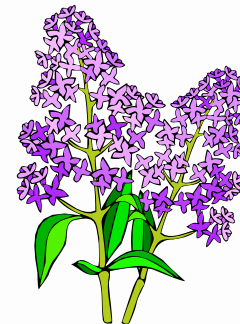
Lilacs belong to the olive family and were introduced to North America from Europe. It is not certain just when the first lilacs arrived but possibly in the 17th or 18th Century. Common lilacs are native to Eastern Europe while some varieties are native to Asia. Lilacs are versatile, hardy, and easy to grow. They come in a wide range of colors, shapes and sizes. Today, there are thousands of cultivars to choose from.

Lilacs need full sun to perform well. They also prefer to be in well-drained soil. Lilacs are usually purchased as containerized or bare root plants. Container grown lilacs are best planted in early spring or in the fall. Bare-root plants should be planted in early spring before bud break. For specimen plants, space them about 10 to 15 feet apart (depending on the variety) to give them plenty of room to grow. Proper spacing allows for good air circulation around the plant, which can reduce the risk of disease. If using lilacs to create a hedge, the spacing can be decreased to 5 to 8 feet apart.

Once established, lilacs require minimal care. It is important to keep them adequately watered while they are establishing. Also, water them regularly in dry weather. Applying mulch around the shrubs will help conserve soil moisture and control weeds. It's usually not necessary to fertilize lilacs. If needed, they can be lightly fertilized in early spring. However, if they are vigorously growing there is no need to fertilize. Too much fertilizer can encourage leaf growth at the expense of blooms.

How long it takes a lilac plant to bloom after it has been planted depends on the cultivar. Some lilacs such as the dwarf Korean or the 'Miss Kim' can flower within two years of planting. Others, like the common lilac, may take up to five years before flowering. To promote good flowering, make sure lilacs are planted in a sunny location where they receive at least six hours of direct sun per day. Also, be sure to properly prune them. Pruning at the wrong time can hurt flower production. The best time to prune is right after the plant finishes blooming. Many lilacs set their buds on last year's growth. Pruning immediately after flowering allows them time during the summer to produce flowering buds for next year.

If you need to rejuvenate a shrub that has become overgrown, you can do a renewal prune. Cut back one-third of the oldest, largest diameter stems to just a few inches above the ground. By the end of year three, you will have an entirely renewed plant without a complete loss of flowering. For shrubs that have been neglected and have become unruly, misshapen or no longer flower well you can do a renovation or hard prune. This type of pruning involves cutting back all the stems to about 3 to 6 inches off the ground. Do a renovation prune while the plant is dormant. Most lilacs rejuvenated by this method will not bloom for 2 to 3 years. We hard pruned our lilacs a couple of years ago. They were grossly overgrown and not producing many flowers. We had to go without blooms for two years but this year the shrubs are 4 to 5 feet tall and loaded with flower buds.



The most common disease to affect lilacs is powdery mildew. This is a fungal disease that can turn up with warm and humid weather. The disease especially favors plants that are not receiving enough sunlight or lack good air circulation. Powdery mildew covers the leaves or shoots with a grayish-white powdery film. It usually shows up in late summer and rarely does any serious harm to the plant. Cultivars are available that have a resistance to powdery mildew.

Lilacs make a great addition to any yard. Besides their lovely fragrance and pretty blossoms, they offer other perks. They are not a favorite of deer. Their blooms attract both butterflies and hummingbirds. Plus, their flowers are edible. They can be candied and added to cakes or pies as decoration. Or try them in salads or mixed with yogurt. Keep in mind that when trying any edible flower; make sure that the plant was not treated with any pesticides. The only downfall I know to planting lilac shrubs is the all too short season we have to enjoy them.

Pest of the Month Apple Scab

Spring is the time to thwart Apple scab control first application should be on now to avoid discolored leaves and fruit and

premature foliage drop later in the season. The young leaves are most susceptible within the first five days of unfolding so the most effective control is early control.

Captan is the most common fungicide homeowners can use and can be used on crabapples and apples. Fungicides labeled for apple scab and containing chlorothalonil or propiconazole may be used but only on ornamental crabapples, not trees in which the fruit will be harvested.



First application should be on now, as the foliage buds are swelling or open and this application should be followed by 2 or 3 more spaced 10 days to two weeks apart.

Excerpt from Pest Update (May 8, 2013) Vol. 11, no. 11 by John Ball, Forest Health Specialist SD Department of Agriculture

Garden Fun Facts

Did you know...

Wheat is the world's most widely cultivated plant. It is grown on every continent except Antarctica.

Pioneers planted 4 corn kernels for every plant they hoped to harvest: "1 for the maggot, 1 for the crow, 1 for the cutworm, and 1 to grow".

The oldest recorded living tree is a bristlecone pine (*Pinus longaeva*) growing on Wheeler Peak in east Nevada. It is believed to be more than 4600 years old.

The plant that takes the longest time to flower is the rare Bolivian herb *Puya raimondii*. The flowers emerge after the plant is about 150 years old, and the plant then dies.

Sunflowers have long been used to control weeds in cultivated fields. They produce a natural toxin from their roots that keeps weeds from germinating.

Plant fun facts 9 Jan 2004 Savannah River Ecology Laboratory [www.uga.edu/srel/]



Save the Date

- June Minnehaha Master Gardener meeting, Monday, June 10th
- Garden Tour, Wednesday, July 10th
- South Dakota Cooperative Extension gardening webinars. To check out upcoming webinars visit www.iGrow.org/ and click on Events.
- Lawn Care workshop in Pierre—designed for homeowners who want to learn more about caring for their lawns by Dr. David Chalmers, SDSU Turfgrass Extension Associate. Time and location: 7 PM, **May 22, 2013**, Pierre Regional Extension Center, 412 W. Missouri Ave. For more information contact the Pierre Regional Extension Office (773-8120)

Master Gardener Notes

- Keep track of your hours! Send completed [forms](#) to Mary Roduner by mail or FAX.
- Write an article for the *From the Ground Up* newsletter.

For more information call the Master Gardener office at 605-782-3290 or send an [email](#).

Plus, check out our [website](#)!

Plant of the Month

By Deb Wallin, Master Gardener

Forsythia x intermedia

Forsythia, Border Forsythia, or Golden Bells

If you want to be one of the first to say “Hello Spring” in your neighborhood, plant Forsythia. Forsythia bushes are among nature's earliest spring bloomers. They are great used as hedgerows, or planted singly. Forsythia is an extremely fast growing bush, growing up to one to two feet per year, maturing at about 8' tall by 10' wide. Established plants require little, or no care. Grow plants in full sun to partial shade. Reduced flowering can occur when planted in a shady location. They will grow well in most soils but should be well drained. Water plants as needed during extended dry periods. Fertilize plants once a year in early spring. Use a high phosphorous fertilizer to promote bright yellow blooms.

Flowers form on prior year's growth, not new growth. So, it's important to prune them immediately after the flowers have bloomed. You can cut back old growth to about four inches from the ground. Don't hesitate to be aggressive in pruning these fast growing plants. They will grow back at a fast rate. Pruning often is a necessity. The decision to prune or leave natural, is a matter of personal taste. If grown in the yard singly or in small groups, they look stunning, when left to grow naturally. If grown as a hedgerow, or along foundations, pruning maintains a neat and orderly appearance.

Forsythia can be grown from cuttings. Select cuttings from new growth. Cut a three to six inch branch, and place the end into moist soil. Keep the soil moist to aid rooting. Rooting should only take a few weeks. Transplant rooted cuttings anytime. However, transplanting established plants is best done in winter while the plants are dormant.



Ohio State University

A Lovely Houseplant

Orchids are said to represent love, beauty and refinement. It's easy to understand how they came to symbolize these ideals once you lay eyes on the elegant blooms that abound within the orchid family. Often associated with exotic, tropical environments, orchids are actually native to most regions of the world. There are roughly 30,000 species known today; however, the number is much larger if you take into account all the cultivars. Saddled with the reputation of being difficult to grow, many of you may be happy to hear that there are several varieties that even an orchid greenhorn like me can grow successfully indoors.

Among the easiest to grow as houseplants are the *Phalaenopsis*. Individuals of this group have flowers that are frequently described as resembling moths in flight and are widely known as moth orchids. *Phalaenopsis*, like most orchids, are epiphytic meaning they grow atop another plant using it for support. In nature, epiphytic orchids are commonly found attached to trees and obtain moisture and nutrients from the air and rain as well as from debris that gathers around their exposed roots.

If you add a moth orchid to your indoor plant collection, keep in mind that epiphytes do not survive if their roots get waterlogged. So it is very important to have the right growing medium. Commercial mixes typically contain course bark that drains well. The bark should remain moist but not soggy. How often you need to water your orchid will depend on the variety plus the size and type of the pot. Moth orchids should not be allowed to completely dry out between waterings. Use room temperature water and avoid the use of softened water. As a note,

orchids growing in a bark medium generally need a nitrogen-rich fertilizer such as a 15-5-5. It is recommended that you use a fertilizer formulated for orchids and follow the label instructions.

Most orchids also appreciate being in a humid environment. They don't need to be in high humidity but since most homes are fairly dry, you can help increase the relative humidity around your orchid by setting the pot on a gravel-filled tray that contains water. Water evaporation from the tray will add moisture to the air. Make sure the plant's roots are not in the water. A room humidifier can be used to increase the relative humidity as well.

One reason why *Phalaenopsis* orchids make good houseplants is that they adapt well to indoor lighting. Give them bright, filtered light such as from an east or south exposure and keep them protected from direct, midday sun. Also, their temperature needs are similar to most other indoor plants. Ideally, the temperature should remain above 60 degrees F at night and in the 70s during the day. Nighttime temperatures that are too warm or light conditions that are too low or too bright can be reasons why an orchid may fail to bloom or re-bloom.

Moth orchids have long lasting flowers and can remain in bloom from winter until early spring. A commonly asked question is “What do I do with my orchid after it has finished flowering?” While some orchids only bloom once a year, moth orchids can re-bloom on the old stem. To encourage a second bloom, the American Orchid Society suggests cutting the stem just above the 2nd node from the bottom. Nodes contain dormant buds and one of the remaining nodes should produce another flower within 8-12 weeks.

Orchid growing was once a hobby for the wealthy but nowadays they are both widely available and affordable.

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