



Barrie Garden Club Newsletter

Cuttings

July & August 2023

Look for us at: www.barriegardenclub.ca



Written by Kimberly Sturge

UPCOMING BGC MEETINGS AT THE ANAF CLUB (52 MORROW RD. BARRIE)



SEPTEMBER 5TH 2023 @7PM

JULIA DIMAKOS

**TOPIC: HARVESTING YOUR VEGETABLE GARDEN –
WHAT TO DO!**

Julia (aka the Gardening Girl)

Gardening is Julia's passion! She is currently pursuing her Horticulturist Diploma through the University of Guelph.

Each year that she gardens, Julia learns more and finds easier ways to do things. She believes in simple gardening and that it is something that should not be stressful or scary. Mistakes are learning experiences to do things better the following year. Julia believes gardening is fun and relaxing, (although physically challenging, at times) but the results are satisfying.

Her gardening tips are for all gardening levels, beginner to advanced. Check out her tips on both her website and blog, which will provide knowledge and inspiration to all levels of experience.

<http://www.juliadimakos.com>

<https://www.juliadimakos.com/blog/>



Julia's Vegetable Garden

Please Note:
There are no
meetings in July and
August as we are...



“

July is not only a season
of the year; it is a
season of the mind and
memory. Hot days and
sultry nights and crashing
thunderstorms are a
part of July, and to the
drone of bees in the
clover fields will soon be
added the high-pitched
sibilance of the cicada.
The tang of ripe
cherries and the
sweetness of sunning hay.

Warren Buffett



www.glovernurseries.com



Save the Date!!

September 12th 2023
Field Trip to Barrie Hill Farms
Dinner and Tour of the Apple
Orchards
\$20.00 per person



**BARRIE HILL
FARMS**
Pick Healthy Homegrown Food



Payment must be made by September 5th
either by:

- Cash at the September Meeting
- A cheque mailed to Carolyn Hooper
235 Steel Street, unit# 6, Barrie, Ontario. L4M 2H1
- Or etransfer to
thebarriegardenclub@gmail.com

(Please make sure you put your name, phone number and BH Field Trip in the Notes)

Email Kim at kmsturge@gmail.com today to reserve your spot!

2023 Convention July 21 – 23, 2023 – Ottawa



OHA 115th Convention
July 21 - 23, 2023
District 2 - Ottawa Valley

District 2 will be to hosting the 2023
OHA Convention from July 21 to July 23,
2023 at the Brookstreet Hotel in Kanata,
Ontario.

They are planning a great lineup of
speakers, tours and entertainment for
this first in-person convention in three
years!

Go to:

<https://gardenontario.org/event/oha-2023-convention/>
for mor information!

Have You Got Your Tickets Yet??

50% of all proceeds go towards Keeping
Ontario Beautiful and supports education
for youth and adults.

Go to:

www.rafflebox.ca/raffle/ontario-ha
to get your tickets!!



How to Stop your Herbs and Veggies from Bolting

from an article by: Lindsay Sheehan



Bolting - or going to seed - occurs when a plant prematurely puts out flowering stems before the crop is harvested. The process diverts precious energy away from the edible bits - the leaves and roots - to instead produce flowers and seeds.

While there are some plants we want to flower (for example- tomatoes, peppers, beans etc.) so that we can harvest their fruits, other types of vegetables and herbs, that are cultivated for their foliage, are much more susceptible to bolting and sometimes prematurely go to seed before we want to harvest them.

These types of plants are:

- leafy greens like lettuce, spinach, and arugula;
- members of the *Brassica* family, like cabbage, kale, broccoli, cauliflower, mustards & brussels sprouts;
- biennial plants such as onion, carrot, beetroot, and leeks.

What Causes Plants to Bolt?

Plants wholly rely on environmental cues to tell them what to do and when.

1. Changes in Day Length

For some plants, longer days triggers flowering. Termed "long day" plants, these go to seed when days are longer and nights are shorter. When long day plants receive more than 12 hours of sunlight each day, this signals that it's time to put out flowers.

2. Changes in Temperature

Cool season crops like artichoke, bok choy, broccoli, cabbage, garlic, kale, and cauliflower are sensitive to heat. As the weather warms, they will certainly go to seed. Dry soil also encourages bolting since it signals to the plant that it's do or die.

3. Poor Soil Quality

Similarly, poor quality soil will also signal to the plant to hurry it up. Too little of nutrients that plants need or the presence of metals, salt, or other pollutants in the soil will initiate flowering.

4. Stress

Sudden temperature swings, lack of water and bad soil are all factors that will stress out plants. In addition to these, insects or herbivores will fast track the plant's lifecycle. Even strong winds can be enough to unduly stress out the plant and induce early blooms.



When the temperatures go up, so does the lettuce.

How to Prevent Plants from Bolting

1. Time Your Sowings

Cool season crops should be started as early as possible in spring. Quick growers like lettuce, bok choy, broccoli rabe, and mesclun mixes can provide quite a bounty before the heat of midsummer arrives.

Do a second sowing a couple weeks after the summer solstice - the longest day of the year - for an autumn harvest of kale, broccoli, beets, Brussels sprouts, and other cool weather veggies.

You can also stagger your sowings throughout the season to increase the odds of many successive, bolting-free harvests.

2. Enrich Your Soil

The best soils are loamy in texture, retain water, drain well, and are rich in nitrogen, phosphorous, and potassium, as well as several other trace minerals, proteins, fats and organic acids.

Amending your existing soil with finished compost is an all-in-one solution for conditioning soil texture, boosting fertility, retaining moisture, and naturally deterring diseases and pests.

To prevent your soil from drying out, use mulch!

3. Keep an Eye on the Weather

Although unpredictable weather and sudden swings in temperature can wreck havoc on your plants.

When growing cool season vegetables and confronted with a heat wave, use a shade cloth to protect them from roasting away in full sun. You can also sow crops strategically by planting spinach, for example, next to taller plants like tomatoes and peppers.

4. Harvest Often

Making sure you harvest on the regular can help stave off premature flowering.

Plucking the outer leaves of cut and come again plants, like lettuce or spinach, will keep the plants from fully maturing. These plants will respond by continuing to grow their foliage more vigorously.

Not only does it extend the vegetative stage and delay the reproductive stage, but harvesting more will ensure you get that delicious bounty too!

5. Try Planting Bolt-Resistant Varieties

Look for "slow bolt" or "heat tolerant" labeled on the seed packet. You should be able to find bolt-resistant lettuce, arugula, cilantro, spinach, kale, beets, collard greens and more.



What to Do If Your Plants Bolt



It's definitely disheartening to see the plants you spent all those months nurturing start to flower before harvest time.

One way to save your crop is to pinch off flowers as soon as they appear on the plant. With herbs like basil, chives, and parsley, removing the blooms will divert their energies back to the foliage without loss of flavor.

Even in cases where it's too late to save the crop, there's always a silver lining. Allowing a few of your plants to go to seed means that bees and other pollinators will have an added supply of food. Collect the seeds for next year's crop or leave the flowers on the plant to provide a nutritious feast for the birds.

DIY Natural Insect Sprays to Stay Bite-free

From an article by: Robin Sweetser



As soon as we step outside, bugs have a way of finding us. Some use the carbon dioxide that we exhale to locate us; others go by scent, body heat, vibrations, or even the colors we wear. For example, deerflies are attracted to CO₂, warmth, motion, and dark colors. One way to make yourself less attractive to insects is to avoid using fragrant soaps, lotions, perfume, hairspray, or aftershave. Instead, use scents that block their receptors, making you harder to find.

Mosquitoes hate citronella, lemon eucalyptus, basil, and garlic.

Ants and flies dislike mint, basil, and bay.

Tiny **gnats** (such as No-See-Ums) are repelled by citronella, lemongrass, and rose geranium.

Ticks and lice avoid lemon eucalyptus and geranium.

Here are 4 homemade bug repellents for your skin—and they take seconds to mix up for an effective everyday spray. Using witch hazel or other simple ingredients, these DIY bug sprays kick those pesky mosquitos and insects to the curb and keep you bite-free. Since different scents repel different bugs, you can target specific ones or use a combination of oils to make an all-purpose repellent.

Make an All-Purpose Insect Repellent

- 2 cups witch hazel, $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. Lemongrass or citronella oil, and 1 tbsp apple cider vinegar.
- 1 cup isopropyl alcohol, 1 cup water, $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. catnip oil.
- 1 cup alcohol or witch hazel and 10-20 drops of essential oils such as lemongrass, peppermint, or lemon eucalyptus.
- 1 qt. vinegar, $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. pennyroyal oil, 1 tsp. lemon eucalyptus oil, 1 tsp. orange oil, and 1 tsp. citronella oil.

Herbal Bug Spray

No essential oils on hand? Use dried or fresh herbs instead. If you can make tea, you can make these two concoctions. Keep them in the fridge for a cooling spray.

- Steep 2 tbsp each of chopped fresh mint, basil, and lavender leaves in 1 cup boiling water until cooled. Strain, add 1 cup witch hazel and shake.
- Boil 1 cup water, add a few cloves and 3-4 tablespoons of dried herbs including peppermint, catnip, and lavender. Mix, cover, cool, and strain. Add 1 cup witch hazel or isopropyl alcohol.

****Be aware that some herbs and oils can be harmful or irritating. Lemon eucalyptus should not be used on children under the age of 3 or on pregnant or nursing mothers & pregnant women should also avoid pennyroyal.**

- Test any homemade bug spray for possible allergic reactions before using it more liberally.
- Sprays made with vinegar may sting and smell a bit pickle-y until they dry.
- Oils may stain clothing.

Label your mixture with its ingredients and store in a dark-colored bottle or keep in a dark spot to prolong its effectiveness.

Do Mosquito-Repellent Plants Really Work?

Luckily, the strong scents produced by some common garden plants can block the scent receptors that the bugs use to find us—but simply including strongly scented plants in your garden isn't enough to keep



the bugs at bay. In most cases, a much stronger, more concentrated amount of a plant's scent is needed to throw the bugs off your trail. The key to generating a strong enough insect-repellent scent is to release the essential oils within a plant's leaves. These plant oils are what have the insect-repelling effect. Burning sprigs of the plant or crushing the foliage are the best ways to release their oils.

- **Lemon grass** (*Cymbopogon citratus*) and **citronella grass** (*C. nardus*) have proven mosquito-repelling abilities thanks to the citronella oil contained within their leaves. The leaves can be crushed and rubbed on bare skin to ward off biting bugs. Tall, tropical grasses, lemon grass, and citronella grass will only survive as perennials in frost-free zones; those who live in colder climates will need to keep them in pots and bring them inside when temperatures drop in the fall.
- **Lemon thyme** (*Thymus citriodorus*) is another citrus-scented plant that can be used as a topical insect repellent. Burning sprigs of lemon thyme (on the outdoor grill, for example) is also effective at keeping nuisance insects away from the immediate area.
- **Lemon balm** (*Melissa officinalis*), like lemon thyme, gives off a scent that's offensive to insects. Apply it topically. If you're planning to grow it, keep in mind that lemon balm is in the mint family, so confine it to a pot to keep it from spreading like crazy!
- **Lavender** has a strong scent that can repel moths, flies, fleas, and mosquitoes. Use it fresh or dry some of the flowers to hang around the house or put in with your clothing to keep bugs out.
- **Garlic** keeps away more than vampires. To be effective against bugs, however, the cloves must be rubbed on the skin, which may end up being more offensive to other humans than to insects. (Sadly, consuming garlic hasn't been shown to keep the bugs away.)



- **Rosemary** may prevent flies and mosquitoes from ruining a cookout. If the bugs are really bad, throw a few sprigs of rosemary on the grill, and the aromatic smoke will help drive the mosquitoes away.
- **Basil** (*Ocimum basilicum*) is a culinary herb that does double duty by repelling flies and mosquitoes, too. It's one of the most pungent herbs and even gives off a strong scent without its leaves being crushed. If you're looking for an insect-repelling plant that you can "set and forget," basil is your best bet.

There might be other plants that have acquired a bug-repelling reputation, but I wouldn't depend on only a few plants to make our yards insect-free. One of the most effective things you can do to cut the mosquito population down is to eliminate any standing water where their larvae may be living!



A Summer Garden Checklist to Keep Plants Thriving All Season

Summer gardening can feel like a whirl of activity! So much to do in your garden before it gets too hot, too weedy, too far along in time... Here is a quick checklist to help you focus to get to that point where you can sit and enjoy it!

1. Spread Mulch

Spreading a 2-inch-thick layer of mulch over your soil is one of the best things you can do for your garden. The mulch blankets the ground, shielding the soil from the sun and keeping it cooler. That puts less stress on plant roots and slows moisture loss due to evaporation. Anything made from organic matter—shredded wood, pine straw, a mix of grass clippings and shredded leaves—will work. As it decomposes, the mulch will help improve soil structure and add nutrients.

2. Pull Up Weeds

It's important to remove them from your garden as soon as possible because weeds steal moisture and nutrients from your plants. Many weeds also encourage insect pests and diseases to move in.

Weeds are easiest to pull when they're young and small, before they produce seeds... moist soil makes this task even easier.

3. Add Color with Summer Annuals

Once summer heat arrives, many spring-blooming annuals will fade. Keep your yard looking tidy by removing any spent plants and replacing them with summer-friendly annuals. These will grow quickly in warm temperatures and will soon provide a beautiful burst of color.

4. Plant Summer-Blooming Bulbs

Summer bulbs like calla, canna, and dahlia are an easy way to add color to your landscape all summer long.

5. Pinch Back Mums and Other Late Perennials

Keep mums, sedums, asters, and other fall-blooming perennials standing tall by pinching the top 3-4 centimetres of new growth. You can do so up to the first week of July. Pinching the tops of the plant typically results in more compact, sturdy growth. It may also encourage the growth of more blossoms from the side shoots, though the flowers typically end up a little smaller and appear a couple of weeks later than normal.

6. Remove Faded Flowers

If you remove spent blooms from many of your annuals and perennials, you might see more flowers. Called **deadheading**, this process prevents plants from producing seeds, so they put more energy into making beautiful blossoms.

7. Watch for Pests and Diseases

As with weeding, keeping an eye on pests and diseases should be done throughout the entire growing season. But midsummer is a particularly important time to fight plant-destroying bugs and diseases because that is when their populations are really taking off. A good resource website for garden pests is: <https://thegreenconspiracy.com/garden-pests-identification-pictures/>



8. Water Your Garden

If your region experience dry summers or a dry weather pattern, you may need to water your garden through the warmest months to keep it looking its best. Most common garden plants prefer an average of 3-4 cm of water a week. It's best to apply that amount all at once to encourage plant roots to sink down more deeply in the soil.

When watering, apply water directly to the ground rather than wetting a plant's foliage; water sitting on the leaves can lead to disease. Drip irrigation systems and soaker hoses are great for this job.



The brilliant
poppy ...
adds
her voice
to sell
the song
That August's
here again.

Helen Winslow

9. Harvest Vegetables

Don't let hot weather keep you out of the vegetable garden. Harvesting frequently encourages your plants to continue producing, and limits pest and disease problems. (Insects are attracted to overripe vegetables that fall off the plant and begin to rot.)

10. Start a Fall Vegetable Garden

Enjoy continued harvests by planting cool-loving vegetables, including broccoli, carrots, kohlrabi, lettuce, and spinach, during summer. That way, you can enjoy fresh, delicious harvests come autumn. **More to come on this in the September-October Newsletter!**

St. Germain Spritz

2023's Official Drink of The Summer

From: <https://www.delish.com/food-news/a44007028/drink-of-the-summer-2023/>

YIELDS:1 PREP TIME: 5 mins TOTAL TIME: 10 mins

Ingredients:

2 oz. St. Germain (a sweet and floral French liqueur made from elderflowers)
3 oz. dry sparkling wine, such as brut Champagne, Cava, or Prosecco
2 oz. soda water
Ice
Celery rib and cucumber slice, for garnish

Directions:

1. Fill a Collins or other cocktail glass with ice.
2. Add St. Germaine and stir to chill.
3. Top with wine and soda water and stir gently to combine.
4. Garnish with celery and cucumber.



Mushroom and Chicken Cheeseburgers

By Joe Sevier

From: <https://www.epicurious.com/recipes/food/views/double-stack-mushroom-chicken-cheeseburgers>

Total Time: 30 minutes

Ingredients:

1 lb. cremini mushrooms, halved if large
 $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. each of salt
1 lb. ground chicken or turkey, preferably dark meat
Vegetable oil (for grill and drizzling)
1 small onion, trimmed, sliced crosswise into 4 rounds
Freshly ground black pepper and no salt seasoning to taste
8 thin slices Muenster or cheese of your choice
4 burger buns
4 Tbsp. mayonnaise
4 Tbsp. mustard
Bread-and-butter pickles and shredded iceberg lettuce
(for serving)



Directions:

1. Pulse mushrooms with $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. salt in a food processor until very finely chopped. (Alternatively, finely chop mushrooms by hand, then toss with salt in a medium bowl and let sit 2 minutes.) Transfer mushrooms to a clean kitchen towel, gather ends together, and wring over bowl to remove as much moisture as possible. (Reserve/save liquid for another use - to add to your next soup broth or combine it with water to cook grains like rice or quinoa)
2. Mix mushrooms and chicken in a large bowl with your hands until well combined. Divide mixture into 8 balls and gently form into patties about $\frac{1}{4}$ " thick. Transfer to a parchment-lined baking sheet.
3. Prepare a grill for high heat; lightly oil grate. Drizzle onion with oil and season with salt. Grill on cooler edges of grill, turning occasionally, until slightly softened and charred, about 8 minutes. Transfer onion to a platter.
4. Season tops of patties with salt and pepper. Place, seasoned side down, on grate and season second side with salt and pepper. Grill until edges are browned, about 2 minutes. Flip and top with cheese. Grill until patties are cooked through and cheese is melted, about 2 minutes. Transfer patties to platter with onions.
5. Grill buns, cut side down, until lightly charred, about 30 seconds. Spread cut sides of bottom buns with mayonnaise and top buns with mustard. Layer pickles, grilled onion, 1-2 patties, and lettuce on bottom buns. Add top and enjoy!

Epic Summer Salad

By Cassie Best

Prep: 10 mins Serves 6

Perfect for BBQs and buffets, this epic salad is an assembly of gorgeous ingredients - no cooking required!

Salad Ingredients:

400g black beans, drained
2 large handfuls baby spinach leaves, roughly chopped
500g heritage tomatoes, chopped into large chunks
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cucumber, halved lengthways, seeds scooped out and sliced on an angle
1 mango, peeled and chopped into chunks
1 large red onion, halved and finely sliced
6-8 radishes, sliced
2 avocados, peeled and sliced
100g feta, crumbled
handful of herbs (reserved from the dressing)

For the dressing:

large bunch mint
small bunch coriander
small bunch basil
1 fat green chilli, deseeded and chopped (optional)
1 small garlic clove
100ml extra virgin olive oil or rapeseed oil
2 limes, zested and juiced
2 tbsp white wine vinegar
2 tsp honey



Directions:

1. Make the dressing by blending all the dressing ingredients in a food processor (or very finely chop them), saving a few herb leaves for the salad. You can make the dressing up to 24 hrs before serving.
2. Scatter the beans and spinach over a large platter. Arrange the tomatoes, cucumber, mango, onion and radishes on top and gently toss together with your hands. Top the salad with the avocados, feta and herbs and serve the dressing on the side.

Have a *chappy* Summer