

**Don Real**

**From:** Chris [chris@canningperennials.com]  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 28, 2006 2:07 PM  
**To:** Chris  
**Subject:** Canning Perennials Fall Newsletter



Produced by Chris Lepard  
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September Issue V.

**Dear Fellow Gardeners:**

When is the best time to cut back your perennial garden? Spring or Fall? There is always considerable debate around this question. At Canning Perennials we try to do all the garden clean-up (or as much as possible) in the fall. There are several reasons why I prefer to cut back my plants in the fall rather than the spring.

Firstly, time is always at a premium in the spring when there just aren't enough hours in the day to get everything done. By cleaning up the garden in the fall it makes life a little bit less hectic. And I like that fresh, clean look in the spring --- when the garden is tidy and bare spring bulbs and early emerging perennials can be properly enjoyed.

I also find clean-up in the fall much more pleasant than in the spring when everything is soggy and rotting. Yuck! Fall clean-up is also a good way to reduce insect and disease problems. Fallen leaves and decaying vegetation provide good places for insects to hide and can also promote a variety of plant diseases.

Some perennials are enthusiastic self-seeders and could easily become weeds if left unattended. We deadhead plants regularly in the garden throughout the season and the final fall clean-up ensures that these plants don't get out of control.

Since there are so many advantages to fall clean-up is there any upside to doing it in the spring? If you live in

**Something to think about . . . .**

"It is not until you have a burning yes inside of you about what is truly important that you can pleasantly, smilingly, cheerfully say no to all of that which is urgent, but not truly important. Our deepest guilt comes from doing the opposite, implicitly saying no to the truly important and yes, yes, yes, yes to the urgent that is not important. The more we are free from nonnecessities, the more we are free to do the more meaningful actions of our lives."

--- **Stephen R. Covey, from *Everyday Greatness: Inspiration for a Meaningful Life***

**Outstanding Perennials  
For Fall**

I walked through my garden this morning to see what was looking great and these are a few of the plants that really stood out:

**Eupatorium 'Purple Bush'**

What an amazing perennial! Huge mauvy purple flowerheads -- still in bloom and has been flowering for over 2 months. Loved by butterflies. Earlier in the month it was not unusual to see a dozen or more monarchs on a single clump. Grows 4-5' tall in full sun to partial shade.

**Sedum**

I have many sedums in the garden. Some

an area that does not get consistent deep snow cover perennials may over winter better if they are left standing and not cut back. Dried stalks and stems will help to protect the plant's crown by trapping any snow that does fall. Once the old stalks are cut back the crown is very exposed to moisture, wind and weather. Left intact, dried stalks and stems provide wind and weather protection for the plant and the entire garden.

At Canning Perennials we start our massive garden clean-up around the middle of October after we've had a few good frosts. I use a weed trimmer with a cutting blade to cut back virtually all the perennials. Stocks and foliage are then raked up and hauled away to our gigantic compost pile. I do not cut back the ornamental grass as these will be enjoyed throughout the remaining fall and all winter long. I also leave any perennials that are still in flower and also any plants with really good looking seed heads – like sedums and globe thistles. If the weather permits (ie the ground is not frozen or covered by snow) the gardens are then given a good weeding. This process puts them in good shape for the next spring.

## NEW CATALOGUE – FEB 1, 2007

For more information and to get lots of ideas please visit our website at [www.canningperennials.com](http://www.canningperennials.com) and our on-line catalogue.

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### CONTACT INFORMATION

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of the best:

**Sedum 'Xenox'** – New this year. Excellent upright form with dark mahogany foliage and deep rosy-red blooms

**Sedum 'Purple Emperor'** – Very deep chocolate-purple foliage set with large dark, rosy-red flowers with a hint of salmon.

In front of these two dark beauties I have planted the low growing **Sedum Angelina**. It has brilliant golden yellow foliage. Wow what a great fall colour combination and actually this grouping has looked spectacular since the early summer.

**Sedum 'Autumn Fire'** This is an improved version of 'Autumn Joy'. Excellent upright form. Very robust. Mid-green foliage set with huge heads of deep rosy-pink blooms. Unlike 'Autumn Joy' there is not a hint of orange or salmon in this variety.

**Ornamental Grasses** are the backbone of my fall garden and I am always on the look-out for new varieties.

**Pennisetum 'Karly Rose'** is a newly introduced Fountain Grass that is quite spectacular. Growing about 3 feet tall it started producing masses of long, fluffy, tan-coloured seed heads by mid-summer which then slowly turned a rosy pink colour. Three months later it is still producing these beautiful sprays of colourful fluff. This grass is rated hardy to Zone 5. We'll see how it fares this winter. I have my fingers crossed as it is one of the loveliest grasses, perfect for the front of the border or smaller gardens.

### **Rudbeckia fulgida fulgida**

This is my favourite variety of Rudbeckia. It starts flowering in early August and keeps going until well into October – even November in milder years. It grows about 30 inches tall and produces masses of brilliant, golden yellow daisies with brown centres. Great for cutting and loved by butterflies. This particular variety of Rudbeckia will tolerate some shade unlike other varieties that need to be grown in full

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**Canning Perennials  
Paris, Ontario**

sun.

Other perennials still in bloom:

Japanese Anemone

Butterfly Bush (Buddleia)

Asters

Salvia

Ligularia Othello – WOW!

**HAPPY THANKSGIVING  
TO ALL**