



Spring has arrived in Clarington, bringing out the aspiring gardener in many residents.

With the arrival of spring many gardeners are eager to start planting their gardens. However, gardeners need to be careful about what they choose to plant since the nights still tend to be cool; frost can develop, which is not an ideal condition for many plants.

Landscape Ontario wants to provide early spring gardeners with some ideas about what they can plant now to fill their gardens with spring colour and which bulbs they can plant now for summer blooms.

“It’s great to see that so many people want to start planting their gardens, but, due to the unpredictable spring weather we usually experience in Ontario, gardeners need to ensure that they are choosing specific plants for their gardens that can sustain the elements,” said Denis Flanagan, public relations manager for Landscape Ontario.

Some of the plants Denis suggests planting right now include:

- Pansies: Ideal flowers for your garden in early spring as they flourish in cooler weather. Seedlings may be planted outside when temperatures average 15 degrees and will tolerate nighttime temperatures around 4 degrees. They prefer to be planted in full sun but will tolerate partial shade.□
- Ranunculus: Ranunculus performs well when it has six weeks of cool weather in which to sprout, grow and bloom, making it ideal for early spring gardeners. It prefers to be planted in full sun.□
- Primula: Most species of primula want moist, rich soil and a cool location with light shade.

The following are also ideal for those eager gardeners as newly purchased plants can be set into the garden in early spring:

- Pussy willow branches: Cut pussy willow branches are a great way to bring spring indoors as they can be used a part of a centerpiece.

In addition, some of the bulbs that gardeners can plant right now for a summer bloom include:

- Gladiolus: Gladiolus are resilient flowers and their bulbs can be planted now even though it is still cool. Keep in mind when planning your garden gladiolus should be planted in full sunlight. □

- Dahlias (tubers): Dahlias should be planted in soil that is free of frost so ensure you hold off until May. But, when you do plant dahlias remember that they like sandy, well drained soil and they grow best in full sunlight. □

- Caladiums (elephant ears): Due to their tropical nature it is also best to plant caladiums in mid-late May.

“All of these plants are also excellent choices for containers or pots, which is ideal since often this time of year planting directly in the garden is difficult since the soil tends to be wet,” says Flanagan.

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